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FINDING THE HISTORY  
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# FINDING THE HISTORY AROUND US



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## INTRODUCTION

This book is an attempt to show how to find history at first hand in museum collections and in historical monuments such as prehistoric and Roman sites, churches and houses. It is hoped that it will be useful both to teachers and to the general public.

The great fascination of history lies in a fuller understanding of our past and a better appreciation of our heritage. Historical sites, buildings and collections are part of our heritage and contain the raw material for the study of the past but it is not easy to interpret them without some knowledge of their contemporary background. Therefore each of the chapters that follow discusses a different type of historical monument or collection and attempts to show how original reference material such as letters, household accounts and pictures can be used to illuminate it. It is thought that it would be helpful to readers to know the way people lived at a given time rather than the way their buildings or tools evolved through the centuries, therefore each topic is discussed at selected periods instead of from the point of view of chronological development. To help a visitor to know what to look for in a historical building or collection, lists of objects are given at the end of each chapter and much space has been devoted to showing where to find the contemporary specimens that may be missing.

Teachers will realize the value of contemporary reference material in helping their children to set a building or collection in its period and both adult and child visitors may find it interesting if they can imagine a building being lived in or a collection of prehistoric tools being used. If children have already acquired some background information, their teacher will be able to conjure up for them figures from illuminated manuscripts, portraits or tombs with which to people the castle or house they are visiting. Similarly an adult visitor may recall, from previous reading, a page from an inventory or an account book which will help him to imagine the original furniture once used in a room that is now empty. Adults and children will find their interest heightened

and will want to know the answers to many questions which can be found later in other contemporary sources.

The topics have been chosen to cover the main types of historical monument and collection. They do not attempt to provide a teaching syllabus for Local Studies. The book is meant rather to encourage not only teachers but other people as well, to take an intelligent interest in historical buildings and museum specimens, wherever they may be. Although the first visits will probably be made at home, there will be many opportunities of historical exploration on holidays and on school journeys. The comparison between local and distant resources is often most valuable. Where visits to places away from home are not possible, or where the local resources are poor, it is useful to collect illustrated guide books, catalogues and post cards. These first hand sources are a great deal more reliable and often no more expensive than cheap text books. As an increasing number of historical letters and journals are being printed, a great deal of background information about places all over the country can be found in any county library. It is only manuscript sources and more specialized museum material that are confined to the locality. It is always possible in fact to start at home to study distant buildings and to learn what is to be found in distant museum collections.

It is hoped therefore that both teachers and members of the general public will be stimulated not only to explore historical monuments and museum galleries at home and further afield, but also to try to find out something about the background into which these sites, buildings and collections fit.

## CHAPTER I

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF PREHISTORY

Prehistory covers the early period in man's story when there were no written records. The sources for the study of this period are found only in material remains ; that is, by means of archaeology.

When studying prehistory, we can do no better than try to approach the subject as far as possible as an archaeologist would. Although most people will not have the time to work on excavations, they will find the results of excavations displayed in museums and they will be able to see many field monuments or remains of prehistoric homes, burials, cultivation and roads in the country. Archaeology when it began simply concerned itself with the collection of rare finds, but now it has developed into a much fuller science : the reconstruction of life in the past from material remains.

One of the great pioneers in modern archaeology was General Pitt-Rivers. His work was important for three reasons, all of which are relevant to us at present. In the first place he demonstrated by his excavations in Dorset and south Wiltshire that it is not the object in isolation which reveals the past, but the object in its original surroundings, with its original associations : for instance the fire-cracked pebble alone does not tell us much, but because it was found in a pot in a Bronze Age hut circle, it shows us that prehistoric man heated his water by putting hot pebbles into it. Secondly, General Pitt-Rivers realized the importance of common and apparently trivial objects and was the first to use post-holes as a means to restore the plan of wooden huts. Thirdly, as an anthropologist as well as an archaeologist, he was able to understand that the prehistoric people of Dorset probably led lives similar to those of many living African tribes with much the same material culture. In his museum at Oxford the modern primitive tools are arranged side by side with the prehistoric tools they resemble. This imaginative interpretation



of the past with the help of the present is displayed in the British Museum (Natural History) where photographs of Australian aborigines at work illustrate the use of some comparable Early Stone Age tools. But in many museums prehistoric implements are still exhibited typologically: bronze axe-heads, for instance, are arranged in rows to demonstrate the evolution of different shapes, but there is no mention of how the tools were used or what they were used for. Therefore, we often have to be our own interpreters, and it is important to know how to find the background material with which we can reconstruct as complete a picture as possible of a given period.

Natural history exhibits will help us to find animals and plants, contemporary with a given culture. Ethnographical galleries will give us ideas of how such activities as hunting, fishing, making fire, cooking, and farming may have been carried out. Air photographs will show us features such as post-holes and lines of cultivation which may have been obscured at ground level by later ploughing. But we must be prepared also to go out into the country to look at local sites and find out where local specimens have come from. At the end of the chapter are two lists of objects to look for in museums and in the field. With these in mind we can try to build up a series of pictures from first-hand evidence of life at different stages of civilization. We cannot take every stage which is represented in England (see chart), but only those which seem to show an advance on one of the following basic techniques or activities: tool making in stone, wood, bone, antler, metal; food gathering and food production, hunting, fishing, herding, farming; home-making, fire-making, cooking, spinning, weaving, pottery-making; burial of the dead.

#### OLD STONE AGE MAN

The earliest evidence of man in England comes from the Second Interglacial Period when there appear to have been men living at Clacton and Swanscombe in the Thames Vall  y. Most of the tools found there were made of flint which was obtained from the bank and bed of the river or on the sea beach where the chalk, in which it had originally been laid down, had been worn away. Flint makes good tools because it can be chipped in such a way that either the flakes themselves can be given sharp cutting

edges or the core can be progressively chipped until it forms a chopping or cutting implement. It is possible to distinguish between flakes that have been broken off naturally, for instance by changes in temperature, and those that have been deliberately chipped by man, because flakes struck by man show a definite bulge coming from the point where they were hit off, and on the

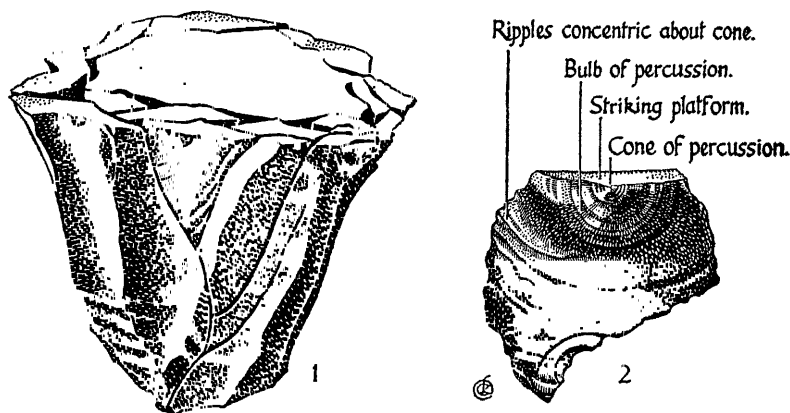


FIG. 1. Flint core with flakes replaced; from gun-flint makers Brandon, Suffolk. After drawing in *Man the Tool-Maker*, British Museum (Natural History).

FIG. 2. A flint flake showing characteristics due to human workmanship; from Old Stone Age gravels near Maidenhead; British Museum (Natural History).

bulge are faint concentric ripples like those on a mussel shell (Figs. 1 and 2). Archaeologists can also tell how a tool has been made because different methods of hitting the nodule produce different kinds of scars. This is important because by the methods used in making tools it is possible to distinguish the cultural group to which the makers belonged, as we shall see by looking more closely at the remains from Clacton and from Swanscombe.

The tools at Clacton were made from flakes probably struck off the core by a primitive anvil technique. In the British Museum (Natural History) where the finds from Clacton are displayed, there is a photograph of a French stonemason demonstrating this method by dashing a nodule of flint against a rock on the ground. This produces the thick flakes and deep scars characteristic of Clactonian tools. An anvil stone, and a deer's leg bone, which

shows signs of having been used as a hammer, have been found on the site.

We can get some idea of the life of the men at Clacton by studying the environment and other features of the culture. Analysis of pollen grains and seeds found in the soil has shown what plants were growing there; the trees included oak, hazel, yew, and alder. Fossil teeth and bones from this and other sites in the Thames Valley show that there were at this time a variety of mammals such as a species of ape like the modern Barbary ape, a fallow deer and rhinoceros now extinct, beaver, lion, hippopotamus, horse, wild ox and elephant. In the river were mussels, one of which was found with the ligament still joining the two shells. These plants and animals indicate that the climate was temperate but warmer than the climate of Great Britain to-day.

The men of Clacton lived by hunting and gathering fruit and vegetables, and part of a wooden hunting-spear has miraculously survived in the water-logged soil. These Old Stone Age men may have hacked the wood for the spear from the tree with a flint core as do the Australian aborigines. Then they roughly dressed the wood with sharp flakes and finished the spear with a crescentic scraper or spoke-shave. (The Yahgans of Tierra del Fuego keep wood shavings for towels and handkerchiefs but probably the Clacton men did not bother to do this!). This spear may have been used against elephants in the same way that the Congo Pygmies of the Ituri forests use their spears in the twentieth century. They smear their bodies with mud, hide in a pool where the elephants come to have mud baths, then sneak up under an elephant and thrust the spear upwards into its soft belly, wounding it so that one of the party can follow it until it dies. Probably the men of Clacton also trapped animals, using the same method as, for instance, the Boro people of the west Amazonian forests. These people dig pits which they floor with sharp stakes concealed by brushwood, and they also set traps on well-used paths. Artificially pointed stakes have been found on a Clacton working floor. The dead animal was dismembered with a chopper core tool and cut up with sharper flakes. Then the skins were scraped clean of meat with a scraper. Finally they were dressed for use as coverings perhaps with a deer's leg bone

from Clacton which was found to have been made shiny probably by being rubbed on skins. Clacton man also ate vegetables and he probably dug up roots and bulbs as the Australian aborigines do. There seems to be no evidence that he had fire, so he must have eaten his meat raw or dried.

The tools at Clacton are from the Lower Thames gravels ; from the Middle Thames gravels laid down a little later at Swanscombe, Kent, have come tools of a different sort. Clacton man had only a primitive chopping core tool and a predominantly flake culture, but Swanscombe man made beautiful hand-axes by skimming off the flakes from a flint core, probably with a wooden bar hammer. The term hand-axe is misleading because the tool was not really an axe but a pear-shaped general purpose tool held in the hand and used for chopping, cutting, scraping, digging, dismembering game and so on. Swanscombe man had throwing stones and probably wooden spears as well, but like Clacton man he had no means of cooking. It is possible that both peoples made themselves some kind of temporary wind-break not unlike the Pygmy shelters which are made of sticks stuck into the ground and bent over to form hoops which are thatched with leaves.

Swanscombe is famous because with the hand-axes were discovered parts of a human skull which, though thicker, are not noticeably different from the modern type. The skull-bones appear to have belonged to a woman because the muscular markings are slight. The sutural margins can be seen to have started to close at the point at which closure usually begins when a person is about twenty years of age, so it is supposed that she was just over twenty.

The Swanscombe skull proves that there were men very like *Homo sapiens* when the Lower and Middle Thames gravels were laid down in the Second Interglacial Period. By the end of the third Ice Age modern man had evolved but for a time a more brutish-looking type dominated the scene in the continent of Europe ; this was Neanderthal or Mousterian man. No skeletal remains of him have been found in this country though in Jersey molar teeth have been discovered. Mousterian flint implements have come to light in Kent's Cavern, Torquay, and a few other British caves.

Modern man, known as Cro-Magnon man, evolved in

Europe in the last Ice Age, and many remains of the various cultures such as Aurignacian, Solutrean and Magdalenian have been found in Europe ; in this country they are represented by a rather mixed and debased culture, known from the type locality as Creswellian. In caves in Devon, the Mendips, Wales and Derbyshire, flint spear-heads, an antler awl, a barbed harpoon and a horse's head carved on a bone have been found, but on the whole Late Old Stone Age remains are less common in England than those from the Early Old Stone Age.

Several skulls from the last Ice Age have been found in England. They are relatively long and narrow, and have fairly strong brows, wide, powerful cheek-bones and large teeth, though none of these are as large as in Neanderthal man. It is interesting that there are various modern peoples with faces of the same shape, and that some are found for instance in North Wales and in Ireland.

The earliest known deliberate burial in Great Britain was discovered over a hundred years ago in Paviland Cave, Gower. As this was before the theory of evolution was established it was not realized that the skeleton belonged to the Late Old Stone Age. At the time it was thought to have been that of a woman, 'the red lady of Paviland', but it has now been proved to have been that of a young man of about twenty-five. The head had been removed from the body perhaps for the same reason as head-hunters collect heads, that is, to acquire a store of the vital essence necessary for rebirth. With the skeleton were a number of interesting Late Old Stone Age ornaments including an ivory armlet, several mammoth ivory bars, beads made from the pierced teeth of reindeer and wolf and some shells. The skeleton and the artifacts were enveloped in red ochre, intended perhaps to represent blood and symbolic of life.

The climate was cold, so Late Old Stone Age men lived in caves and to keep warm wore skin clothes sewn together with sinews. By this time they were also able to make their lives more comfortable with fires as is proved by the discovery of ashes associated with artifacts in some of the caves. There are a number of primitive ways of making fire still practised to-day, and probably prehistoric man used one of them. For instance the Eskimos use the bow drill, which is a bow used to twirl a vertical

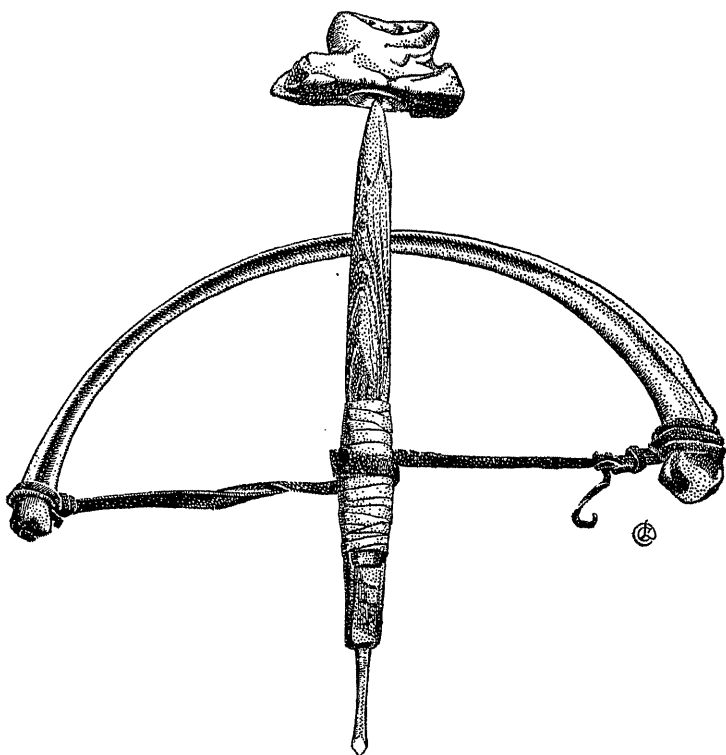


FIG. 3. Eskimo bow drill from Smith Sound. The bow and the chin rest are made of bone, the shaft is made of wood, the point of iron and the bow-string of leather thong. Originally the points were made of stone. The bow drill might be used for making fire or for drilling holes. British Museum.

stick on a log. The friction produces smouldering wood dust which is tipped on to dried moss and which the Eskimo blows carefully until it bursts into flame (Figs. 3 and 4). The discovery of fire mean that meat could be cooked. As there were no cooking pots it was probably grilled on an open fire or perhaps roasted in an earth oven.

#### MIDDLE STONE AGE MAN

After the end of the Ice Age the climate became warmer and great forests grew up all over England. The excavations at Star Carr, Yorkshire, displayed at the British Museum (Natural History) show how one group of people at this time (the Magle-

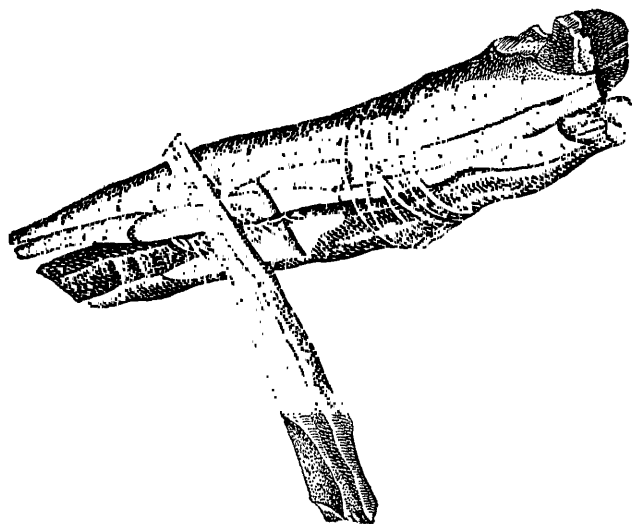


FIG. 4. Aboriginal fire-saw from Central Queensland. The handle is of soft wood which is split to allow the smouldering dust to fall through on to the tinder below. The splint used for sawing is of hard wood. *British Museum.*

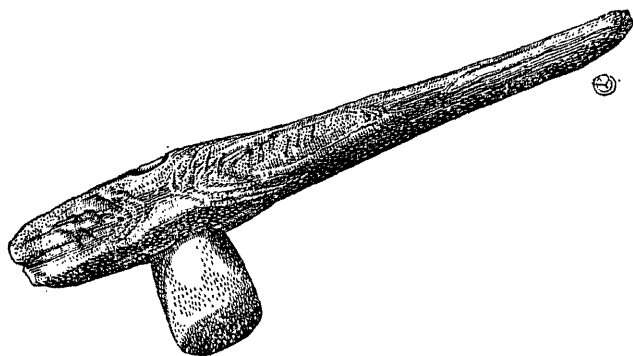


FIG. 5. Papuan hafted axe from New Guinea. The stone axe is inserted directly into a hard-wood shaft. *British Museum.*

mosians) lived in these forests. The boggy nature of the soil has preserved much that usually perishes with time; antler, bone and even fungus. Analysis of pollen grains found in the soil has shown that the dominant tree was birch, and finds of animal bones and teeth indicate that there was in the forests a variety of life which included elk, red deer, roe deer, wild ox, wild boar, fox, European beaver, and marten.

The tools of Middle Stone Age men were adapted to this environment. There have been found heavy flint axes, adzes and picks which were hafted with wooden handles and used for cutting and shaping the forest trees. As there were so many deer in the forests, these men specialized in antler work. There is an antler shown in the British Museum (Natural History) with parallel grooves made in it by a flint burin or graver; the intervening span was split out and then fashioned into a harpoon. Many antler harpoons were found at this site. The birch trees in the forest provided bark which the Maglemosians may have made into baskets and other receptacles; rolls of birch bark have been found which suggest this.

The other speciality of this period was the production of very small triangular, quadrangular, or lunate flints called microliths. Sometimes a single one was hafted with the base of the triangle as the edge; one was found in Denmark and is presumed to have been an arrow-head but it might also have been used as a kind of chisel for woodwork. Sometimes a whole row of microliths was hafted on a wooden handle, and at White Hill near Huddersfield thirty five microliths were found in a row which suggested that they were once mounted on a handle for use as a saw.

Enough has survived of this Middle Stone Age culture for us to begin to imagine the life of Maglemosian men. At Star Carr was discovered the base of a house. In the British Museum (Natural History) there is a photograph showing a platform of birch branches weighed down by stones and with traces of birch bark flooring and charring of wood from domestic fires. Lumps of iron pyrites and a specimen of bracket fungus from which it is suggested the Maglemosians had removed the top to use as tinder, were also found on the site. Perhaps these men made fire by the same method as the Yahgans of Tierra del Fuego,



which is described by E. L. Bridges in *The Uttermost Parts of the Earth*. 'They strike two pieces [of pyrites] together and receive the sparks either into some dry down of sea birds or the powder of the puff ball'.

Middle Stone Age men were primarily hunters and fishermen. A microlithic arrow-head has been found in the skeleton of an aurochs bison in Denmark. Flint picks have also been found, and might have been used for digging holes to trap game. There are flint knives to cut up the meat and scrapers to clean the skin. A canoe for fishing has been found at the mouth of the river Tay in Scotland. This must have been hollowed out of a log of wood with an adze and probably a hammer and wedge also. In this country very little of the fishing equipment survives, but a bone harpoon was dredged up from the North Sea. In Denmark bone fish-hooks have also been found. The harpoons, barbed on one side only, were probably hafted on the end of a long stick in pairs and used as fish spears in the manner of the Eskimos.

#### NEW STONE AGE MAN

In the Old Stone Age flint nodules for tool-making were picked up from the surface of the ground but in the New Stone Age seams of flint were followed under ground and mined from shafts driven in the chalk. There are the remains of these chalk mines at Cissbury on the Sussex downs and at Grimes Graves in Suffolk, and the tools used in extracting the flint have been found. At the Castle Museum, Norwich, there is an antler pick which still has on it the finger-marks of the New Stone Age man who used it three thousand years ago. In the British Museum there are implements from Cissbury such as the shoulder-blade of an ox used as a shovel and rough bowls of chalk which held burning fat and served as lamps. If you go down one of these mines you descend a shaft in the chalk by a modern ladder and then find yourself in a circular chamber from which radiate many low passages. To go along them you have to crawl on your hands and knees, unwinding a ball of string as you go, in order to find your way back. In certain places you can still find the black marks on the roof made by smoke from the chalk lamps and also the marks of the picks, one of which was found resting against a seam of flint.

As they had better flints, the New Stone Age men began to use more elaborate techniques to work them into tools. From this period come the ground and polished axe, adze and mace heads, some of which were perforated so that they could take a wooden handle. By this time it was discovered that some of the finer-grained igneous rocks lent themselves better than flint to grinding and polishing, and we find in museums ground and polished tools of basalt and, for example, diorite or greenstone, which resemble very much the tools of the Maoris and other Polynesians. These stone axes were made sometimes in stone axe factories, such as the one of which remains can still be seen on Penmaenmawr, and then traded all over the country. On Salisbury Plain have been found axes from Wales, the Lake District, Cornwall, Northern Ireland, and Brittany.

We know how the grinding and polishing and perforating of tools was done in New Stone Age times largely because it is known how the Maoris produce similar tools to-day. The axe-head was roughly shaped from a nodule, probably with a wooden or bone bar; then it was ground down by rubbing on a slab of wetted sandstone or on a hard rock with sand in between to act as an abrasive. Stones rubbed smooth by being used for this purpose are found on New Stone Age sites quite frequently. The ground and polished axe-heads and many other New Stone implements such as spear-heads, arrow-heads, mace-heads and adze-heads, were hafted with wooden handles. In the British Museum an axe from the Great Langdale axe factory is shown fitted into a hole in a wooden handle, but there would presumably have been some thonging of sinews or strips of skin to keep it firm. There is also a chisel from Europe in its original antler socket, and a knife in its original bone socket; but on the whole the handles of flint implements have disappeared and their nature has to be deduced from tools made by primitive people to-day. (Fig. 5.) Sometimes an axe is hafted on to a split stick and bound on; sometimes a withy is bent round it (in Australia it is stuck with spinifex gum as well); sometimes an axe or a hoe is hafted on a stick with a natural elbow-joint; sometimes the tool itself is perforated so that the handle can be fitted on to it. There is a prehistoric mace-head in the British Museum with one shallow pit on each side, which indicates that the method of perforation

was by pecking or drilling at alternate sides until the two conical pits met and formed a hole. Later on, perforations were made by a drill, probably a bow drill with a stone point, of the type used by Eskimos and others.

As well as making ground and polished tools the New Stone Age people perfected flaking techniques so that they could produce flat almost smooth knife-blades, sickles and leaf-shaped arrow-heads. This was probably done by the method of indirect percussion used by the North American Indians. An upright of bone or wood is put between the nodule of flint and the hammer in order to lessen shatter. The edge of the tool is then worked up by pressure flaking: that is by removing thin flakes by carefully controlled pressure with a piece of hard wood or bone rather as a dentist scales our teeth.

From the New Stone Age we can begin to get some idea of the dwellings in which people lived. They have survived best in stone-bearing areas such as Dartmoor, and one of the best known is at Skara Brae in Scotland where a group of squarish stone-built houses linked by narrow passages was found still containing their original fittings of stone beds and dressers. In other areas where wood was used in building, often only the post-holes remain to suggest how a house was built.

In the dwellings that have been found there is always the remains of a hearth or cooking place and sometimes a few potsherds. Pottery is extremely important to the archaeologist because clay is very variable, and differences in mixing, handling and firing produce distinctive and identifiable ware. Pottery, which was first made in the New Stone Age, was made by hand until the Iron Age people brought the wheel from the Continent, and the method used was probably similar to that used among African tribes to-day. The Ilorin, for instance, have a mould over which they beat the clay for the bottom half of the pot; the top half is made by adding a coiled strip of clay to the mould-made base. The Yoruba use a shell for scraping and smoothing, a pebble for burnishing and a stick or thorn stem for ornamenting by impression. On prehistoric pottery we can see sometimes the traces of coils in the finished pot. Some pots were coiled right from the bottom, the process developing from coiled baskets (still made in Samoa) which may also have served as moulds.

The decoration of these early pots is usually such as could have been made when the clay was wet by impressions from the finger-nail, from cords of twisted grass<sup>1</sup> or a sharp stone or stick. The Beaker folk (see chart) had particularly fine pottery with over-all geometric patterns. The pottery was probably baked in the open in a fire of dried brushwood. The Hopi, of the Arizona desert, dry the pots in the sun, then place them round the fire to heat slowly and finally set them on the embers in a pile separated by broken sherds or stones and make over them a domed mound of fuel which burns steadily for several hours.

The New Stone Age people were the first to start producing their own food as a supplement to hunting animals, fishing and gathering vegetables. At Windmill Hill on the South Downs they had domesticated animals and it is thought that the causewayed camps still to be found on the chalk downs were pounds for keeping cattle in. Besides cattle, which was the biggest numerical group, pigs were also kept, together with a few sheep and goats. In Salisbury Museum there is a skeleton of a dog which might have been used for herding. The people of this period were primarily hunters and herdsmen, but there is evidence that they also cultivated the land. A few small garden plots of the New Stone Age, together with many of the Bronze Age, have survived round the remains of dwellings on Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor (see Bronze Age). Flint sickles have been found with a lustrous polish on the cutting edge deposited by the silica in the corn stalks. Saucer querns or grinding stones for making the corn into a kind of flour have been found in the causewayed camps of the Windmill Hill people. Impressions of grain have been found on pottery, especially in the Bronze Age.

We have to imagine the New Stone Age men and women leading on the whole more settled lives than those of the Old and Middle Stone Ages. They made themselves houses, kept flocks and began to till the soil. Life in the home must have been easier when pottery appeared; even though at first it was probably not strong enough to put straight on the fire it must have provided many more receptacles. We do not know what the housewife did with her flour, but perhaps she made dampers, or

<sup>1</sup> The only evidence of the existence of cord at that time.

some kind of cake flavoured with berries and baked in an earth oven.

The New Stone Age is famous for its megalithic tombs. These were tombs made of large slabs of stone either in the form of a room at the end of a passage as at Bryn Celli Dhu in Anglesey or in the form of a gallery with a varying number of transepts as in the Cotswold-Severn area. The tombs were long in shape and are now generally covered with turf, but sometimes the stones only are left standing. The entrance was usually at the broad end of the mound and was between two wings built out from the mound. This forecourt was probably used for the ceremonies preceding burial. The tomb was used for successive burials, and sometimes burial chambers were inserted into the side of the mound. In chalk areas there are earthen long barrows in which numbers of people were buried, not successively but all together, possibly as some form of sacrifice. In some Yorkshire long barrows there is evidence of the bodies being at least partially cremated before being buried.

Ritual burial of any kind presupposes a belief in immortality and indicates some kind of religious belief. There are other indications of religious belief in the New Stone Age, namely the famous stone rows and stone circles of Wales, Cornwall, Dartmoor and other places, which are usually associated with burials at the foot of some of the stones. The grandest of them all is at Avebury, built by the Beaker folk (see chart) with only antler picks, shoulder-blade shovels, and probably strong wicker-work baskets and simple hoisting tackle. There is a great encircling bank and an inner ditch with four entrances. Inside is a circle of megalithic stones, a thousand feet in diameter, and within that two smaller circles. A long avenue of pairs of monoliths leads up to the south-east entrance. All the stones are of local origin and have been roughly dressed by pecking. They must have been hauled into position on wooden rollers and then set upright with the help of ropes and stakes in shallow cavities in the ground. The Avenue (Kennet Avenue) continued a further mile up to Overton Hill where excavation has revealed post-holes of another six circles of wooden posts as well as the socket-holes of stone uprights. That all this was achieved as early as the New Stone Age is proved because New Stone Age pottery of the

Peterborough people has been found under the bank. Pottery of the Beaker people has been found in the ditch and with the burials which are at the foot of the pillars in the avenue.

The earliest part of Stonehenge is also the work of Beaker people. In its first period the monument has a circular ditch and bank with one entrance and one ring of holes which contain remains of burials. It was not until the Bronze Age that the great stone circles were set up (see below), but already in the New Stone Age bluestones from Wales had been brought to Wiltshire. One weighing over a ton was found near a long barrow on Salisbury Plain, and some of the bluestones used in the Bronze Age circle show signs of having been used earlier in some monument which has since disappeared.

The disappointing thing about Avebury and Stonehenge is that though they are magnificent field monuments and enduring evidence of the dexterity and faith of their makers, nothing really definite is known of how they were used or what religious system they enshrined.

#### BRONZE AGE MAN

Bronze is an alloy of 90 per cent copper and 10 per cent tin. Its discovery produced a specialist class of travelling bronze-smiths who have left behind some of their moulds, metal cakes, and tools such as hammers, anvils, gouges, chisels and tongs. It is partly from these workmen's hoards that we know how Bronze Age tools were made.

Flat shapes, such as the first bronze axe-heads which resembled the stone ones, could be cast in open moulds, and axe-heads with loops for the handle bindings could be cast in two part moulds. The hollow axe-heads which fitted over their handles and the small buckets which appeared in the Late Bronze Age had to be made by the more complicated *cire perdue* process. The name means lost wax: a wax replica of the object, held between moulds, is melted and replaced by molten metal. This process is still practised by the Ashanti of West Africa and the method they use is displayed in the British Museum. A core made of a mixture of charcoal and clay and representing the interior of the object, is covered with a wax skin, representing the form of the object. The wax skin is then covered with a clay mould with a mouth at

the top into which the molten metal will go. A clay crucible containing the metal is fixed over the mouth of the mould and both are put into the fire together. The metal melts and, being the heavier, takes the place of the wax which is absorbed by the porous clay. The result is a hollow metal object of the same form as the wax skin. (Fig. 6).

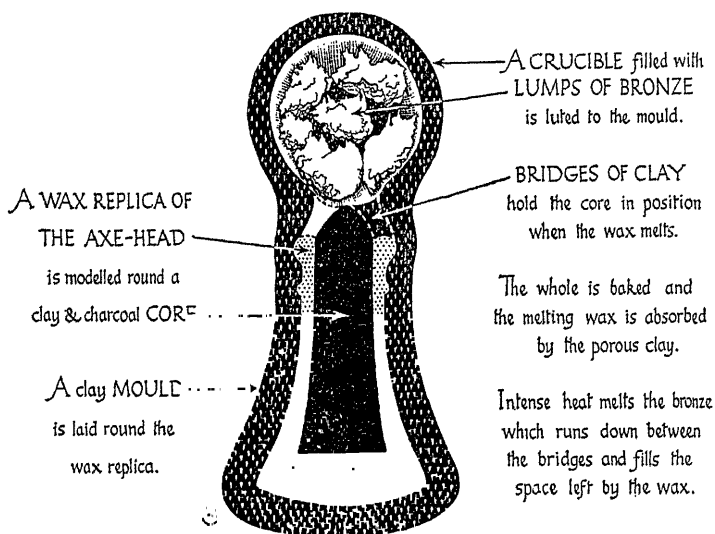


FIG. 6. Diagram to show method of bronze casting by *cire perdue*.

In prehistoric times bronze was also hammered to produce flanges for the attachment of axe-heads and swords, to strengthen and renew cutting edges, and in the Late Bronze Age to shape sheet metal. Hammering with a punch produced incised decoration, and hammering from inside on moulds produced repoussé decoration, both of which were also practised with even better effect in Iron Age La Tène art.

The tools and implements produced by the Bronze Age smiths were many and varied. Several methods of hafting axe-heads were tried—the tang, the flange, loops—until finally the hollow or socketed axe-head was evolved. With the coming of bronze, swords and daggers became possible and metal shields and spear-heads were made. The great advantage of bronze over

flint was that it could be resharpened by hammering. Many tools originally made in flint were now made in bronze. In the British Museum there is a bronze chisel from Millbank in its original antler handle, and several tanged and socketed knives and sickles. But flint continued to be used ; barbed and tanged arrow-heads were made in flint in the Bronze Age.

Bronze Age homes are a good deal more plentiful than New Stone Age homes especially in stone-bearing districts. On Dartmoor there are numerous remains of single-roomed huts (circles of stones with an entrance). The entrance, made of two stone uprights and a lintel, was narrow and so low that we should have to crawl in ; sometimes there is, in the absence of a door, a shelter wall as some protection against the prevailing wind. The walls, made of turf or loose stones with facings of vertical slabs, were from four to six feet thick and not more than four feet high ; the roof, supported by a central post, was probably of branches and turves ; the floor was of beaten clay. There was often a low stone seat or bed, and associated with a hearth sunk into the floor were found fire-cracked pebbles, probably used to heat water in pots not strong enough to be put in the fire. At Legis Tor a pot was found just as it might have been left by the housewife on the hearth, with a fire-cracked pebble inside it.

Domestic life in these huts, and in other wooden and wattle ones of which traces have been found on the downs, was gradually improving. By the Late Bronze Age women had bronze cauldrons in which for the first time they could seethe a stew or soup. By this period, too, there is evidence of spinning and weaving so that the skin clothes, which had persisted since the earliest times, were replaced by clothes made from the wool of domestic animals and from flax : is it too early to imagine that these new clothes might have been washed ?

Spindle whorls, or perforated discs placed at the bottom of the spindle to increase its spinning, date from the Bronze Age, and they were used in the same way as medieval women are shown using their spindles in illuminated manuscripts. The wool had to be carded, with a teasel or by hand, so that the threads were all drawn out ; then a bit was put on a long stick, the distaff, and held upright under the left arm. A length was pulled out, twisted by hand and attached to the notch at the top of the



spindle; then with the left hand the spinster would go on pulling out and twisting the wool while with the right hand she twirled the spindle (Fig. 7). Evidence for weaving comes from post-holes and from the loom weights which were used to keep the warp threads taut on some kind of upright loom such as that used by the Hopi people in the Arizona Desert for spinning cotton. Unfortunately no actual fabrics have remained in this country, though they have been found in the water-logged wooden coffins of Denmark.<sup>1</sup> In the British Museum are photographs of clothes from these coffins: a man's loosely woven woollen kilted skirt and cloak and a woman's blouse and skirt with a tasselled girdle. In England there are impressions of fabrics, for instance on a dagger blade from Lambourne barrows. Together with these new clothes goes an increasing interest in ornament. Twisted gold torques or collars, ornamental pins, jet, amber and faience beads have been found in graves.

Many Bronze Age hut circles are surrounded by a small enclosure, and archaeologists are able to decide that these were once cultivated because they show lynchet formation which cannot occur unless the soil has been broken. Where the soil has been disturbed by cultivation on sloping ground there is a tendency for it to slip and to form small banks or lynchets which remain even after grass has grown again. In Darfur in North Africa lynchets and hut circles can be seen where natives have recently abandoned settlements very similar to these prehistoric ones. These plots might have been dug over by either of the two primitive agricultural tools, the digging-stick or the hoe, both of which in primitive tribes to-day are usually used only by women.

The digging-stick is a dibber or long stick with a fire-hardened point and sometimes a stone weight or bar on which to put the foot: it is the origin of the spade. A prehistoric hoe might have been made of an antler or suitable forked stick or of a flint point hafted at right angles to a wooden handle. Wooden hoes made from two longish sticks bound together at an acute angle can be seen on Egyptian wall paintings, and in the Pitt-Rivers Museum

<sup>1</sup> Conditions in which water-logging and lack of aeration persist cannot support the bacteria and fungi which cause decay. Perishable articles sometimes remain preserved indefinitely in such places as peat bogs where these conditions prevail.

at Oxford there are several wooden hoes from Africa; for instance there is a one-piece hoe from French West Africa, and another from Tanganyika with a blade of hardwood tanged into a wooden haft. (In America the Carib Indians used a pair of claws of the great armadillo tied to a stick). From either the digging-stick or the hoe or both, the plough was evolved in the Late Bronze Age, and with its use agriculture became the work of men.

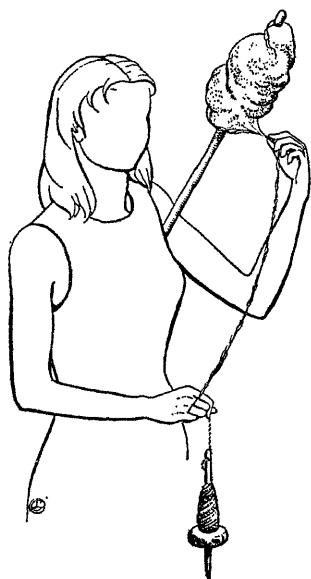


FIG. 7. Diagram to show method of spinning with a distaff. The wool is pulled out with the left hand and the spindle is twisted with the right hand. When the spindle stops revolving the twist runs up the wool and makes it into yarn.

Connected with some Bronze Age settlements are found Celtic or square fields which are the earliest evidence of the use of the plough. The plough that cultivated the fields has not survived because it was made entirely of wood. It was probably simply a rather heavy wooden hoe with a handle at the back for the ploughman to keep the plough well in the ground; ploughs like this can be seen being dragged by oxen in Spain to-day. In the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford there is a donkey-plough brought from Algiers in 1923, which is hardly more than this, although it has an iron shoe for the share which the Bronze Age plough would not have had. There was no coulter to cut the soil or mouldboard to turn it over. Prehistoric ploughs simply scratched the top of the soil, so the fields had to be cross-ploughed;

that is why they are square and therefore datable to this early period. This plough was only able to deal with light soils and so traces of its work are found on the chalk down where lynchets have been formed owing to the slope and the resultant soil erosion.

Bronze Age people were not only tillers of the soil but also herdsmen. Associated with the system of Celtic fields on the Hampshire-Wiltshire border can be seen boundary dykes and ditches which enclosed cattle ranches. The Late Bronze Age people also had ditched rectangular kraals, some as large as two acres, which were perhaps used like Highland shielings for lambing and calving. Near the ranches have been found contemporary quadrilateral enclosures, possibly temporary shelters for herdsmen. At Martin Down was found a large pottery vessel that might have been a milk pail. From the horse harness such as bone cheek-bits, that has survived from the period, we know that by this time the horse was domesticated. Nave-bands for wheels prove the existence of wagons also.

Bronze Age people buried their dead singly in round mounds. These barrows, marked *tumuli* on Ordnance Survey maps, can be seen all over the downs in the south of England; and in the stone-bearing districts their place is taken by cairns. They vary greatly in size and shape: they may be from five to sixty yards in diameter and they may be mounds, or mounds with an encircling ditch. At the beginning of the Bronze Age burial was by inhumation, sometimes in wooden coffins. It seems likely that people were buried in their clothes, as buttons of amber, bone, and jet have been found in front of the chest as if from a cloak, and pins have been found behind women's skulls suggesting that they wore their hair in buns. There is an Early Bronze Age burial from Grimsthorpe, Yorks, which contained a body wrapped up in skins and a bark vessel stitched with sinews. The Early Bronze Age people, who were pastoral nomads, have left very little behind them except grave furniture so it is chiefly from this that we know them. They, like other pagans, buried with the dead person weapons or ornaments so that he or she should not go unrecognized in the next world, and they placed food in bowls as provision for the journey there. There is a description in *People of the Deer* by Farley Mowat, of a pagan

Eskimo grave which the author found in 1952 and which compares very well with these Bronze Age graves. The roof of the mound was constructed of the owner's long winter sledge, and the openings were filled with rocks and thatched with willow : beside the grave were deer spears, snow knife, bow drills, and a stone lamp bowl containing five stone pipes. Other graves he mentions had the remains of chunks of meat.

By the Middle Bronze Age cremation had become the dominant burial rite and cinerary urns began to make their appearance. These urns which, with their macabre contents, are so frequent a sight in museums, are simply the pottery vessels in which the charred remains of the dead were put. Sometimes they were let into the side of existing barrows and in the Late Bronze Age they were buried in great urnfields.

Associated with Bronze Age burials is the greatest of all British prehistoric sites, namely Stonehenge. The Bronze Age part of Stonehenge consisted originally of an outer circle of thirty upright sarsen stones, each weighing about twenty-six tons. On the tops of these were horizontal stone lintels each with mortises which fitted on to tenons of the uprights and with tongued-and-grooved joints to fit on to the next lintel. Within the sarsen circle was another consisting of bluestones from Prescelly, South Wales, two of which can be seen to have been lintels in some earlier, probably New Stone Age, building. Within the bluestone circle were five massive trilithons and a horseshoe of bluestones. An altar stone made of sandstone from South Wales lies near the centre of the circles. Both the sarsen stones and the bluestones have been dressed and the heavy hammer-stones which were used have been found packed round the bases of some of the uprights.

Such an enormous monument as Stonehenge could only have been built by people of great wealth. There is ample evidence from the numerous round barrows near by that these Bronze Age people were very rich and traded extensively. Amber from Jutland, gold from Ireland, bronze pins from Bohemia and china beads from as far away as Egypt have been found in the barrows. Recently a connection between Stonehenge and Mycenaean Greece has been proved by the discovery of an engraving of a dagger on one of the uprights. Similar daggers from Mycenae

dating from about 1600-1500 B.C. help to date Stonehenge to the same period, that is to the Early Bronze Age.

It is still not clear how Stonehenge was used, but various alignments of the stones suggest that the chief purpose may have been to celebrate some great festival of the winter solstice, when at sunset the sun's rays pass through the great trilithon which may have represented the doorway into the underworld.

### IRON AGE MAN

Iron was first produced by heating iron ore on a charcoal fire kept at great heat by bellows which were probably made of skin like those of some African tribes. The iron melted and collected in a mass at the bottom of the fire. The cinder impurities were hammered out while the metal was hot and the iron was then ready for immediate hand forging. The Late Iron Age people probably had kilns in which to smelt the iron ore. These may have resembled those of the Yoruba in Africa to-day who make a kiln of baked clay in which they put alternate layers of ore, charcoal, clinkers to act as flux, hardwood and palm nut shells. A clay pipe leads from the bellows to the base of the furnace. In Glastonbury Museum there is an Iron Age clay pipe and some small pieces of iron ore.

Iron axe-heads, spear-heads, swords, daggers and sickles were made and bronze was reserved for ornamental purposes. The Iron Age B people were famous for their art which is known as La Tène art from the type locality in Switzerland. They produced the most beautiful incised, relief and enamelled bronze work on sheaths, mirrors, shields and horse-trappings, many of which can be seen in the British Museum.

The excavations at Little Woodbury, near Salisbury, have given a remarkably complete picture of a farmstead in the Iron Age A period. Post-holes remain to suggest that there was a large house surrounded by a double palisade. Within the enclosure there were timber frames which might have been used for drying corn, work-places where threshing and winnowing might have been done, wooden platforms on which to store the seed corn, and chalk-lined storage pits for the grain to be used for food. This corn would have been roasted to prevent it from fermenting in store. The land was ploughed with a light two-

oxen plough, perhaps by now equipped with an iron share, but until the Belgae brought the heavy plough from the Continent there was no means of actually turning the soil. The corn was reaped with an iron sickle and ground in a quern. The Little Woodbury people also kept cattle, sheep and pigs. Iron slag-heaps at the site show that these people smelted iron and worked it on the spot as they needed it.

The remains of the lake village at Glastonbury show another kind of Iron Age settlement which has been well preserved through being buried in damp, unaerated soil. The village was built on piles in the middle of a lake and surrounded by a palisade. There were some sixty circular huts with wattle walls and clay floors. Hearths were made of baked clay, and at Meare, another lake village near Glastonbury, there were clay ovens also; so here at least some kind of cakes were baked and meat was perhaps roasted. The women, in addition to cooking, would also have been occupied with spinning and weaving; whorls, loom-weights perforated bone bobbins to go into shuttles and even parts of a loom have been found. These people made their own pottery which is famous for its beautiful incised decoration. The rotary principle was not applied to pottery until the Belgae brought the potter's wheel from the Continent but the people at Glastonbury already had rotary querns. So instead of laboriously rubbing grain between two stones to produce flour, women could now simply spin the top stone of the quern round with a handle. The rotary principle was also adapted to woodwork, and men were turning wooden vessels for the home on some kind of pole lathe. Fragments of wickerwork have survived here proving that baskets were also made, and possibly men made wickerwork fish-traps and even frames for coracles.

Glastonbury was on an island, and to get to and from it the villagers had to have canoes. Dug-out canoes were probably hollowed out of logs partly by burning, partly with a hammer and wedge and partly with an adze. These canoes have no oar holes and must have been propelled by paddles. A dug-out canoe was found at Glastonbury and so also was a wooden landing-stage. We can imagine not only the heavy dug-out canoes laden with produce from the shore tying up here but also, though none of these have survived, light, easily manœuvrable coracles probably

made like modern Welsh ones of ox-hide stretched over wicker work. Pliny, in the first century A.D., mentioned coracles being used in Britain.

During the Iron Age Britain was subjected to many invasions, and one enduring result of this is the number of hill-forts remaining in strategic positions. The single ramparted hill-forts, such as St. Catherine's Hill, Cissbury, and the Trundle on the South Downs, may indicate that there had been native resistance against the warrior bands from the Marne (La Tène people) in the mid third century B.C. The multiple ramparted hill-forts, such as those at Hembury, Ham Hill or Maiden Castle, probably appeared towards the end of the Iron Age. The invasions of the Belgae stimulated another outcrop of hill-forts when the Iron Age B people were driven into the Marches and North Wales. These hill-forts were probably refuges to which people living at places like Little Woodbury could repair in an emergency, and the size of the areas enclosed indicates that they were meant also to include flocks. There are very rarely any remains of houses although there are usually numbers of storage pits and rubbish pits. Probably emergency shelters were put up just for the time being.

The fighting equipment of the Iron Age people was elaborate and very beautiful. Iron swords and daggers in bronze sheaths with geometric, incised patterns can be seen in the British Museum together with helmets with repoussé patterns and studs scored to take enamel. Bronze shields from the Thames and from the River Witham in Lincolnshire show tendril and palmette ornament and are embellished with coral studs. The warriors as they went into battle in their chariots must indeed have been a splendid sight as, in addition to all this shining armour, they had bronze brooches to fasten their cloaks and bronze and jet bangles on their arms. Some of these warriors have been found buried with their chariots in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The most usual survivals of all the splendid equipment that was put into the graves to accompany the dead into the next world are iron tyres, bronze nave-hoops, lynch-pins, iron horse-bits and decorated bronze terret-rings through which the reins passed.

We have seen how man has satisfied his basic needs of food, shelter and protection, in a variety of ways, over an immensely

long period from the time of the first creatures who could make tools, down to the magnificently armoured warriors described by Caesar at the beginning of recorded history in England. We have seen also how at nearly every stage of development there is some group of modern primitive people who correspond to the prehistoric people. The comparison between the primitive and the prehistoric is useful in both directions ; each throws light on the other.

## SOME PREHISTORIC OBJECTS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS

### GENERAL IMPLEMENTS

Flint hand-axe ; flint scrapers of different shapes ; adze-heads and axe-heads of flint, stone, bronze and iron ; flint and stone mace-head for hammering ; flint burin for engraving ; flint, bronze and iron knife, saw, chisel and gouge ; bone and antler awl for piercing ; bone and antler needle ; whetstone.

### WEAPONS AND HUNTING AND FISHING EQUIPMENT

Flint, bronze and iron spear-head ; flint and iron arrow-head ; bronze and iron shield, sword, helmet and dagger ; flint throwing stone ; bone, wood and antler harpoon ; bone fish-hook.

### FLINT TOOL-MAKING EQUIPMENT

*Old Stone Age:* flint hammer stone, bone hammer.

*New Stone Age:* Red deer antler pick, ox shoulder-blade shovel, chalk lamp ; polishing stone.

### METAL WORKER'S EQUIPMENT

*Bronze Age and after:* Stone and metal moulds ; metal ingot ; metal hammer, anvil, chisel, gouge, punch, etc.

### FARMING EQUIPMENT

*New Stone Age and after:* Flint, bronze or iron sickle ; flint hoe, iron billhook ; grinding stones or quern ; charred grain ; grain impressions on pottery ; iron shoe and iron ploughshare, iron coulter ; bone bridle bits ; metal nave bands for cart wheels.



## POTTERY

*New Stone Age and after:* Cooking pots of various sizes ; cinerary urn for the ashes of the dead ; food vessel in which food was placed for the dead.

## ORNAMENTS

*Stone-Age:* beads of stone, fossil or teeth ; in the *Bronze Age and after*, bronze, gold or enamel brooches, mirrors, torc or collar, armlet and buckle ; jet, amber or faience beads ; bone and metal pins.

## SPINNING AND WEAVING

*Bronze Age and after:* Stone or bone spindle whorl ; stone or clay loom weight ; bone weaving comb ; bone spindle for bobbin.

## METAL VESSELS

*Late Bronze Age and after:* Drinking vessels, buckets and cauldrons of bronze and gold sometimes mounted on wood.

PRIMITIVE TECHNIQUES TO LOOK OUT FOR IN  
ETHNOGRAPHICAL COLLECTIONS

Agricultural tools and their use ; digging stick, hoe, plough, sickle, grinding stone.

Use of spindle whorls and upright loom.

Methods of making pottery by hand.

Hunting and fishing apparatus.

Fire-making and cooking.

Methods of making and hafting tools in stone, wood, bone and metal.

NATURAL HISTORY EXHIBITS WHICH MAY PROVIDE A  
BACKGROUND TO PREHISTORIC MAN

Analysis of pollen grains and seeds ; bones and teeth of fossil animals ; origin of man.

## PREHISTORIC FIELD MONUMENTS AND SITES

## HOMES AND FARMS

*Old Stone Age:* Caves: e.g. Creswell Crags, Derbyshire ; Kent's Cavern, Torquay ; Aveline's Hole, Mendips ; Paviland Cave, Gower.

*New Stone Age:* Causewayed camps or temporary pounds for cattle: e.g. Windmill Hill, Sussex. Hut circles and corn plots with lynchets: e.g. Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor.

*Early and Middle Bronze Age:* Hut circles and corn plots on Dartmoor. Linear earthworks or ranch boundaries in chalk region of Wessex.

*Late Bronze Age.* Hut circles and Celtic square fields: e.g. Plumton Plain, Sussex; Longmynd, Salop; Grassington Moor, Yorkshire.

*Iron Age.* A. Post-holes and enclosures of farm at Little Woodbury, Wilts.

B. Glastonbury Lake Village (site only); Brochs in Scotland.

C. Belgic camps: e.g. Wheathampstead, Herts.

## MILITARY SITES AND BOUNDARIES

*Iron Age:* Hill-forts on South Downs and in Wales; later ones have multiple ramparts. Dikes used as boundaries: e.g. Offa's Dike, Wansdike.

## INDUSTRIAL SITES

*New Stone Age.* Flint mines: e.g. Grime's Graves, Suffolk; Cissbury, Sussex. Stone axe factories: e.g. Penmaenmawr, Wales. (Of copper, tin and lead mines little remains as the sites have been continuously used ever since).

## ANCIENT TRACKWAYS

Icknield Way, Berkshire Ridgeway, and the Pilgrims' Way on the North Downs are of pre-Roman date.

## RELIGIOUS SITES

*New Stone Age:* Megalithic tombs made of huge stones and used for many bodies: e.g. passage to a round or polygonal chamber as at Bryn Celli Dhu, Anglesey; gallery or parallel-sided tomb as in Cotswold Severn area. Long barrows, used for many bodies, in Wessex and Sussex. Embanked sanctuaries with one entrance: e.g. early part of Stonehenge. Stone circles: e.g. Avebury.

*Bronze Age:* Round barrows in Chalk areas, cairns in stone areas, single man burials, at first inhumation then cremation. Stone circles, rows and standing stones, Stonehenge.

## PREHISTORIC CULTURES IN GREAT BRITAIN

Prehistoric cultures are usually named after the place in which the tools were first found.

## ICE AGE.

1ST INTERGLACIAL ending about 500,000 years ago.

## ICE AGE.

2ND INTERGLACIAL ending about 200,000 years ago.

*Clacton Man* : flake tool culture.

*Proto Homo Sapiens* : Swanscombe Man hand-axe culture.

## ICE AGE.

3RD INTERGLACIAL ending about 100,000 years ago.

ICE AGE. *Homo Sapiens*, Cro-magnon Man ;  
in Europe Aurignacian, Solutrean, Magdalenian cultures ;  
in Britain Creswellian culture, Red Lady of Paviland ;  
*Mousterian Man* was a side-line in N.W. Europe.

## MIDDLE STONE AGE. 8,000-2,500 B.C.

Warmer climate, Britain becomes an island.

*Maglemosians*. Star Carr, Yorks : bone and antler tools, flint microliths.

## NEW STONE AGE. 2,500-1800 B.C.

*Windmill Hill Culture*, Wessex : causewayed camps, hoes, flint-mines, long barrows, pottery, ground axes.

*Stone chambered tomb culture*, north and west Britain.

*Secondary New Stone Age cultures* of tranchet axes, petit tranchet arrow-heads, stone axe factories : included Peterborough (Northants) ; Rinyo-Clacton (Scotland and Essex), house at Skara Brae ; Ronaldsay (Scotland) ; Dorchester (Oxon), henge monuments.

*Beaker Folk*, Wessex 1800 B.C. : round barrows ; used but did not make bronze ; grave pottery with geometric patterns.

## BRONZE AGE

*Early Bronze Age*. 1700-1400 B.C. Food vessel people : grave pottery. Wessex culture : bell and disc barrows, nomadic herdsmen.

*Mid-Bronze Age*. 1400-1000 B.C. Urn people.

*Late Bronze Age*. 1000-500 B.C. Deverel-Rimbury culture : bronze smith hoards, urn fields, light plough, spinning and weaving.

## IRON AGE

*Iron Age 'A'*. 500 B.C. Little Woodbury, Wilts : farmstead.

*Iron Age 'B'*. 250 B.C. (La Tène). Yorkshire, Wessex, Glastonbury ; metal work and enamel.

*Iron Age 'C'*. 75 B.C. Belgae : heavy plough, pottery wheel, coins, tribal kings.

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## CHAPTER II

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF THE ROMANS

#### INTRODUCTION

Britain was a Roman province from the first century A.D. until the beginning of the fifth century A.D. The area effectively occupied covered south, east and midland Britain and stretched north to the lowlands of Scotland, west over the whole of Wales, but did not include Devon and Cornwall. Most of the evidence for reconstructing the life of Roman, as of Prehistoric, Britain consists of objects in museums and of buildings and monuments still to be seen *in situ*. But as Britain was part of the Roman Empire we can draw for the first time in British history on written evidence as well. The account of Julius Caesar (102-44 B.C.) of his campaigns in Gaul (France) included that of his attempted invasions of Britain, and in this book we can read the earliest descriptions of the people of our country. Tacitus (A.D. 55-117) in the biography of his father-in-law, Agricola, tells us of the campaigns to extend the Roman frontiers in Wales and Scotland. Meanwhile, in Rome, great writers were describing the kind of life these generals brought to Iron Age Britain. Virgil (70-19 B.C.) in the *Georgics* tells us of Roman methods of farming, while the Younger Pliny (A.D. 62-113) and Seneca the Philosopher (4 B.C.-A.D. 65) give interesting details about their private lives in the letters they wrote to their friends. There are many archaeological remains of Roman life in Italy, especially in Rome, Pompeii and Herculaneum. The eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79 overwhelmed these two latter towns and covered the streets and houses of Pompeii with volcanic ashes and of Herculaneum with liquid mud, with the result that many of their buildings have been preserved until modern times. Finally, in countries nearer home, such as France and Germany, there are many material relics of the time when these places were part of the Roman Empire.

From all this material, both archaeological and literary, it is

not difficult to build up a picture of Roman Britain and to see how it fits into the wider picture of the Roman Empire. The conquest was achieved by force of arms and until the end the Romans had to keep armies on the frontiers especially in the north. We shall find therefore that in the north of Britain and in Wales the relics are mostly military. It was mainly south and east of a line drawn from the Humber to the Severn estuary that a peaceful Romano-British civilization was built up in the towns and in the villas or country estates.

#### THE ROMAN ARMY AND THE CONQUEST OF BRITAIN

Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 B.C. and 54 B.C. but he was not able to conquer the country. He landed in Kent but on both occasions his ships were badly damaged by storms. The Iron Age Britons whom he encountered were splendid fighters, and even the highly trained Roman armies were unnerved by their method of attack. Caesar says that first of all the warriors drove about in their chariots throwing spears to break up the Roman ranks, and that then, leaping to the ground, they engaged on foot while the charioteers went to the rear. The charioteers had their horses so well controlled that they could stop and turn them even on a slope. The warriors, moreover, would run along the shaft between the horses, throw their spears from this vantage-point and then return to their chariots. Caesar was much harassed by these tactics in his advance into Britain, but he managed to find and storm at Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire, the headquarters of Cassivellaunus, one of the most important British chiefs. Some of the earthworks which formed the defences of this capital still remain.

The descendants of Cassivellaunus built up a large kingdom in mid and east Britain; and Cunobelin, his grandson, traded extensively with the Romans, as is proved by the Roman pottery of pre-conquest date found at his capital, Colchester. After his death the will to resist Rome slackened and in A.D. 43 the Romans under the Emperor Claudius were able to invade Britain and make it a province of the Empire. There are the remains of this Claudian invasion in the small eastern area that he subdued. At Richborough, Kent, under the third-century fort, a huge

platform, which was found covered with marble chippings, is thought to have been the foundation of some monumental building erected at the place where the Claudian forces landed and commemorating, perhaps, the conquest of Britain. Under the Norman castle at Colchester there are the remains of the sub-structure of a temple which the Emperor Claudius ordered to be built in honour of his divinity in A.D. 50 when most of south and east Britain were under Roman control. This temple was part of the imperial religion of emperor-worship of which there is evidence in other parts of the country: for instance there is a bronze head of Trajan in the British Museum and a stone head of Constantine in York.

Britain was conquered by four legions composed of Roman citizens and by cohorts of auxiliaries drawn from other provinces. Each legion normally consisted of 5600 heavily-armed infantrymen in ten cohorts; the auxiliaries were divided into lighter armed infantry and cavalry. At Colchester, one of the first places to be occupied and turned from a tribal capital into a Roman town, there are some interesting military relics. A fragmentary bronze diploma in the museum records the honourable discharge of an auxiliary which enabled him and his family to obtain Roman citizenship. A tombstone gives us a portrait of a centurion, who was an officer commanding a hundred men in a legion. He is shown wearing the uniform which consisted of a woollen tunic and leather jerkin reinforced by metal bands on the shoulders and hips. His heavy woollen cloak, which he would have used as a blanket at night, hangs from his left shoulder, and round his waist is a fine ornamental belt. He is armed with a dagger and sword and he holds his staff of office in his right hand. From carvings in Rome, such as those of Trajan's column, we know that in battle the centurion would also have worn a helmet, carried a half-cylindrical shield and on his feet would have had hob-nailed sandals like those in the Guildhall Museum, London. Most Roman collections have parts of soldiers' weapons such as shield bosses, spearheads, swords and daggers. Colchester museum has also a tombstone bearing the portrait of a cavalryman on horseback. He is shown wearing scale armour and riding down a defeated Briton. The cavalry were usually placed on the wings of the line of battle and were used for pursuing the



retreating enemy. The Roman army also contained skilled carpenters and masons like those depicted on Trajan's column who are building fortifications and siege works.

Roman soldiers carried not only weapons but also rations, cooking utensils, entrenching tools and stakes for making camp. Each evening when they halted for the night they made a rectangular defensive earth rampart reinforced by a palisade. Some of the earth ramparts of Agricola's marching camps which were built for his invasion of Scotland still remain, a day's march apart, in Strathmore. On the Gask Hills alongside Strathmore, Agricola had signal stations one to two miles apart. These stations remain as round ditched platforms about fifty feet across on which were built wooden towers. From them messages were flashed by torchlight or beacon at night and by smoke signals during the day.

The culmination of Agricola's great northern campaigns (A.D. 78-83) was the battle of Mons Graupius. Tacitus,<sup>1</sup> unfortunately without telling us exactly where it was, described this engagement, and from his description we can get some idea of a Roman general's methods. Agricola first of all made a stimulating speech to encourage his men, reminding them of how often they had wanted to come to grips with the enemy, and that now at last they had dislodged them from their lairs. 'You have caught them—they never meant to stand. It is only extreme danger and deadly fear that have rooted them to this spot, where you may gain a great and memorable victory. Have done with campaigning, crown fifty years with one day of splendour, convince Rome that, if wars have dragged on or been permitted to revive, her soldiers were not to blame!' After this says Tacitus, 'The troops were mad for action and ready to rush into it, but Agricola marshalled them with care.' The auxiliary infantry, as always, had to bear the brunt of the attack. It was put in the middle, the cavalry were put on the wings and the legions were stationed between the line and the camp. 'Victory would be vastly more glorious if it cost no Roman blood, whilst, in the case of repulse, the legions could restore the day.' The Britons were on a hill except for their chariots which were harassing the Roman front line. Agricola took up his position on foot with the

<sup>1</sup> From the Penguin translation of Tacitus, *On Britain and Germany*.

colours. The fighting began with an exchange of spears until Agricola called up his reserves to fight it out at the sword's point. This was disadvantageous to the Britons whose swords had no thrusting-points and whose shields were small. The Romans 'began to rain blow after blow, push with the bosses of their shields and stab at the enemy in their faces', so that the Britons were routed on the plain. When the British reserve made a gallant charge from the hilltop, Agricola was ready with four squadrons of cavalry with which to break and scatter them, and when they retreated he rode round and fell on them in the rear. 'The spectacle that followed . . . was awe-inspiring and grim.' The Romans went on taking prisoners and killing, and the British went on charging to their deaths. 'Arms, bodies, severed limbs lay all around and the earth reeked of blood.' When the enemy rallied in the woods and tried to ambush their pursuers Agricola was prepared with another plan. He surrounded the woods with legionaries while the cavalry went in to scour out the enemy. So ended one of the greatest defeats of the British and one of the greatest Roman victories in Britain.

In the early stages of the conquest the Romans must frequently have had to besiege British hill forts. At Birrenswark in Dumfriesshire beneath an Iron Age hill fort there are two Roman camps which are thought from their position to have held siege works. At the fort of Bremenium in Northumberland there is a stone platform which might have supported an *onager*. The onager discharged large round stones and two of them, each weighing about one hundredweight, have been found. Another form of artillery used in besieging was the *catapulta*, a kind of mechanical crossbow which fired a heavy dart; there is an iron tip from one of these darts in the British Museum. From Latin authors we know that the Romans also used the battering ram, and that to protect themselves as they advanced to the walls of a fort they formed a *testudo* or protective shell from interlocking semi-cylindrical shields. This is shown in sculpture on Trajan's column in Rome.

As the conquest proceeded, roads were built to enable the army to get from one place to another quickly and thus to keep the country under control. Roman roads can be recognized because they run straight from point to point on low ground only

curving to avoid ravines where the army might have been ambushed. For details of how to find undiscovered Roman roads and track them across country, the reader is referred to the relevant chapters in O. G. S. Crawford's book *Field Archaeology* and I. D. Margary's *Roman Roads in Britain*, Volume I (1955). Here we will just consider briefly what the roads looked like. In the south they are usually made of compacted chalk, gravel or small stones but in the north they are sometimes paved. At Blackstone Edge, near Manchester, there is a road sixteen feet wide with a paved surface and central sunk channel held between curbstones. On Craven's Way, Great Whernside, Yorkshire, there are also flanged culverts for drainage. Milestones have sometimes been discovered on the roads. There is, in the British Museum, one which was erected by Hadrian eight miles from Kanovium near Conway in Wales.

Agricola's victory at Mons Graupius in A.D. 83 could not be maintained and by A.D. 120 the defensive frontier had to be drawn up further south. The line was drawn between the Tyne and the Solway, and the Emperor Hadrian came himself to see to the fortifications. Hadrian's wall was finally about fifteen feet high and seven and a half to eight feet wide with an embattled parapet patrolled by sentries who lived in fortlets and turrets and operated signal stations.

The garrison defending the frontier lived in forts placed at intervals along the wall. To the north of the wall there was a V-shaped defensive ditch, and to the south of it there was a service road and a flat-bottomed ditch. Twenty years later the Romans made an advance, re-occupied some of Agricola's forts and built a new wall across the Forth-Clyde valley. Strategically the new frontier, known as the Antonine Wall, was weak because the enemy could outflank it by crossing the firths at either end but tactically it was an improvement on Hadrian's Wall. There was no rearward flat-bottomed ditch and no mile castles and turrets, but a much larger ditch was dug in front of the wall, and the forts were smaller and closer together so that the garrison could act more quickly. The earth ramparts and ditch of this wall, which for a short time superseded Hadrian's wall, are still visible.

At the beginning of the third century there was once again

trouble on the northern frontier and it took all the efforts of Severus and Caracalla (A.D. 209-211) to restore the boundary in a series of fierce campaigns and to re-fortify Hadrian's Wall. At South Shields a fort showing several layers of occupation has been excavated; its greatest period of development was the third century when the site was covered with storehouses where stock was piled for the campaigns of Severus and Caracalla; the imperial seals for the goods are in the museum at the site. This fort is remarkably complete and shows what we should look out for in others. The remains of the administrative headquarters suggest that there was a colonnaded court surrounded by stores and offices and that beyond this was the judgement hall with a dais for courts martial. The foundations of the shrine of the regimental standards can be seen as well as those of the payroom and record office both of which were heated by a hypocaust added in the fourth century. Under the shrine is the strong-room for money where the remains of a barred window can still be seen. In the second half of the fourth century when the frontier was re-established, a new force arrived, whose task was to transport stores to the garrison at the Wall. Some of the storehouses that were no longer needed were then converted into officers' quarters.

Throughout the occupation the Romans had to defend their northern frontier against the Picts but by the third and fourth centuries they had also to secure the south and east coasts against Saxon raiders from the Continent. It was then that they built the fine series of Saxon shore forts such as Richborough, Pevensey, and Porchester, whose walls still stand although they failed in the purpose for which they were built. Richborough, which as we saw earlier had a first-century fort, was refortified at the end of the third century. The stone walls are still in some places twenty-five feet in height and there are remains of circular bastions at each corner. The main entrance is in the west wall and has a guard chamber on either side of it; inside there are remains of offices, baths and a temple for the regimental deity. Outside the walls there is an inner ditch with the abutment remaining from a wooden bridge and an outer ditch with a causeway over it.

While Roman soldiers were defending the outposts of the Empire against Picts and Saxons, a kind of provincial Roman life was developing in lowland Britain.

## ROMANO-BRITISH TOWN LIFE

Various kinds of towns existed in Britain under the Roman occupation. There were four colonies or towns for time-expired soldiers : Colchester, York, where a colony and a fort grew up side by side, Lincoln and Gloucester. Secondly there was Verulamium, St. Albans, which was a municipium whose citizens had the privileges of Roman citizens. Thirdly there was London, probably the commercial capital. Fourthly come the tribal capitals like Silchester which were run by the nobility of the tribe but had magistrates and a town council on the Roman pattern. Fifthly comes Bath which was a spa.

Verulamium is an example of a town which reflects the history of the occupation. The first settlement on the site was the Iron Age city at Prae Wood where Tasciovanus, the son of Caesar's old enemy Cassivellaunus, had his capital. At the conquest Verulamium was one of the first places to be taken over by the Romans. It was built mostly of wood, wattle and daub and fell an easy prey to Boudicca in A.D. 61 when she swept across the country, burning not only Verulamium but also the cities of London and Colchester. At Verulamium there are still the burnt remains of this first city. After this disaster an earth-work was constructed. In the second century the city was rebuilt on a larger scale and encircled with defensive stone walls. The buildings of the second city were of stone, and remains have been found of houses, temple, theatre, forum and shops. There was a good deal of subsequent building but by the late fourth century a decline had set in and rubbish dumps have been found in the theatre showing that it was no longer used for its proper purpose. There is a tradition, unsupported by archaeological evidence, that in the early fourth century St. Alban was martyred during the Christian persecution under Diocletian. In the medieval abbey, built on the hill above Verulamium where the martyrdom took place, there remains part of the shrine on which there is a fourteenth-century carving showing St. Alban being beheaded by Roman soldiers.

The second Roman city was bounded on one side by the river and on all four sides by walls. Outside the walls was a ditch and bank which is double in the south-west angle. Parts of the walls remain and can be seen to be made of a core of flints bonded with

brick but most of the facing stones have gone. Watling Street, the Roman road which runs from Dover via London to Chester, enters Verulamium by the South East Gate and leaves it by the North West Gate. The finding of the foundations of the South East Gate has made it possible to construct a model which is now in the museum. The gate was a hundred feet wide, had two doors for wheeled vehicles and two for pedestrians, and was flanked by semi-circular bastions. The streets were laid out in the grid pattern which is preserved in some towns which were re-occupied after the end of the Roman Empire. Within the city several sites of public buildings have come to light. There was a triumphal arch, probably a less elaborate version of the arches of Rome which are carved with sculptures recording the exploits of victorious Emperors; from it has come a slab of fluted marble now in the museum. There was a fine theatre with front and back stage, dressing-rooms, a semi-circular auditorium with seats rising in tiers and an oval arena. Here the citizens of Verulamium probably were entertained with singing and dancing and with blood sports since the theatre also served as an amphitheatre.

Although the city had a place for musical entertainment, excavators have not yet revealed that it had any public baths such as we can still see at Bath, Somerset. There a lead pipe brought the water straight from the hot springs to the bath. Seneca, who at one time lived near some public baths in Rome, tells us of the kind of things he heard going on. 'Athletic fellows swinging weights and whistling and blowing . . . someone being rubbed down . . . the chant of the scorers at the ball game . . . the uproar when a thief was caught in the act . . . the man who likes the sound of his own voice . . . the chaps who dive in and hit the water with a resounding splash . . . the cries of the cake seller, the sausage man and the pastry man.' All this might have been going on at Bath, but at Verulamium, so far as we know at present, the citizen had to have his bath in his own house and meet his friends socially in the forum or theatre.

One of the most important buildings in a city was the temple, and we have already noticed the temple at Colchester for the worship of Claudius. At Verulamium a triangular temple in a fork of two streets near the south-east gate has been found. Only the foundations remain but among the objects associated

with it and now in the museum were a tall lamp-chimney, such as might have been used to shield an everlasting light, votive offerings including an ox skull and pottery vessels containing small items of food and drink. Italian pine needles were also found suggesting that the temple was dedicated to Attis or Cybele.<sup>1</sup> This was a pagan temple and there was another near the theatre in the west half of the city. We have as yet no trace of a Christian church at Verulamium but at Silchester there is a tiny, apsidal building, very like a church in plan, which may have been Christian.

The most exciting temple site found in Britain recently is that of Mithras discovered in the city of London in 1953-4. It is basilican in form with the entrance at the east end leading directly into the nave. Two sleeper walls were discovered each of which supported a row of seven columns dividing the nave from the narrow side aisles. In the temple were found several most interesting marble sculptures indicating how it was used. The central mystery of the cult was the killing of a bull. There is a head of Mithras looking over his shoulder as if to do this. There is also a head of Serapis, the Graeco-Egyptian god of the underworld; a head of Minerva with two dowel holes in the top possibly for fixing a helmet of bronze; a figure of Mercury and a Dionysiac group with the legend 'life to wandering men'. The heads were all made in Italy of Italian marble. It was the custom to make bodies of statues of inferior material and these probably disappeared when Christianity became the official religion, while the valuable heads were deliberately concealed and have therefore survived. With them was found an enormous hand, more than twice life size, which is holding an object resembling the hilt of a dagger. The hand has a dowel rod coming from the wrist showing it to have been part of a colossal statue which may have represented Mithras in the act of finishing off the bull. This statue would have been too big for this particular temple and so it is possible that there is another, larger temple still awaiting discovery somewhere under the warehouses of the city. The Mithraic cult was a mystery cult for

<sup>1</sup> When Attis wished to marry, Cybele was jealous and drove him mad so that he castrated himself and died. Cybele was repentant and prayed to Zeus who allowed the spirit of Attis to pass into a pine tree and violets to spring from his blood.

men only and was especially favoured by soldiers, officials and merchants, of which there would have been many in London, the commercial centre of Roman Britain. The figures of Serapis, Minerva, Mercury and Dionysus were also connected with the underworld and promised, as the inscription quoted above suggests, happiness after death.

As pagans the Romans, like the prehistoric people, buried their dead with grave goods and cemeteries have been found outside most Romano-British towns. In the first and second centuries of the Empire they cremated them, placing the ashes in pots or glass jars arranged in groups. But during the second century inhumation came into fashion and in the third century it ousted cremation. We have coffins of stone, marble and lead but of wooden coffins only nails remain. With the coming of Christianity, which was adopted as the official religion by Constantine (A.D. 306-337), bodies were buried in coffins normally without grave goods. At Colchester there is an interesting burial from A.D. 50 of a child whose grave goods included toys, a feeding bottle and money to pay Charon, the boatman who ferried the dead across the River Styx. Some Romans had inscribed tombstones. At South Shields there is the tombstone of a British freed slave-woman whose master, a Palmyrene, had married her and buried her in state. She is shown sitting in her best clothes with her jewel box and sewing basket at her feet.

Portrait busts as funerary monuments are rare in Britain although they are comparatively common in Italy. The discovery of two at Lullingstone villa in Kent in 1949 was therefore very exciting. The busts are of Greek marble and were probably made in the eastern Mediterranean: from them we get a glimpse of the features of two Romans living in Britain in the second century. Bust I is of a man of about forty-five to fifty with curly hair and blunt-pointed beard; he is wearing a tunic and a cloak pinned on the right shoulder with a large round brooch. Bust II is of a younger man with straighter hair and a square-cut beard; he is wearing a tunic and a toga. It is probable that they 'represent part of the family portrait gallery of some person in the imperial service, stationed in Britain for a longish term and imported by him into the province'.<sup>1</sup> One of the interesting things about

<sup>1</sup> *Archaeologica Cantiana*, Vol. LXIII, 1951.



them is that they were found in a basement room in the villa in association with votive pots of third or fourth-century date. This seems to indicate that later owners of the villa set up the busts in a kind of shrine. The cult of the dead was a well-known practice in Roman religion and great significance was attached to the portrait which affected the immortal soul now living in the next world.

The centre of a Roman town is the forum. At Verulamium the forum has not been fully excavated because it lies under a churchyard, but the existence of a city hall, market booths and administrative buildings has been established. There is not much evidence of shops, though a house equipped with a particularly large cellar is thought to have been a wine shop.

It may have been like the tavern at Pompeii which had bronze containers for liquids let into the counter, *amphorae* for wine stacked at the back, a large lamp and on the table the money paid by the last customer. At Silchester have been found dyers' workshops containing remains of furnaces and old coppers. At Pompeii was discovered a bakery with eighty-one hard and black rolls that someone had left in a sealed and almost air-tight oven. At Verulamium the tools of various shopkeepers have survived, although we do not know exactly where their shops were. There are a number of carpenters' tools such as awl, punch, adze, hammer, axe, chisel and nails. The butcher has left his chopper, flesh-hook, and skewers. These are displayed in the museum with a photograph of a Roman relief-carving from Dresden which shows a butcher cleaving a joint on a wooden block; in front of him sits a customer in a chair reading her order from the wax tablets in her hand; behind him hangs, for weighing the joints, a steelyard like the one in the British Museum. Other industries carried out at Verulamium included the making of coarse pottery for kitchen use and the manufacture of locks and keys.

Now that we know something of the public buildings and industries of the town we shall want to know next what the people walking in the streets looked like. At Verulamium there are no gravestones with portraits, but the museum displays instead photographs of statues in Italy. One shows a man wearing a tunic, toga and boots, the other a woman with her hair waved

and plaited and wearing a tunic, mantle and sandals. The tunic was a long garment with or without sleeves, worn with a belt. The toga, a mark of rank, was a very large half circle of material worn draped over the left shoulder, under the right arm and over the left shoulder again. Shop-keepers and labourers would wear only a tunic. A dancer or slave girl might have worn leather trunks like those at the Guildhall Museum. Apart from this unique find of leather trunks, garments have not survived, but every Roman collection has some jewelry in it. We can find bronze brooches and buckles, rings, earrings, beads and ornamental pins of carved bone and metal. Sometimes also there are toilet articles : little glass bottles for cosmetics such as kohl for darkening the eye shadows, small bronze spoons, nail cleaners, tweezers, combs and polished bronze mirrors. We can see from coin portraits how women's hair style varied. Faustina in A.D. 140 is shown with her hair coiled in a crown of plaits on top of her head, while Lucilla twenty years later has hers gathered in a bun. In the Yorkshire Museum, York, there is the actual hair of a Roman woman dressed to show how ornamental pins were used. Men's hair fashions changed also. On his coins Vespasian has short straight hair and is clean shaven but Hadrian and his successors have short curly hair and beards.

What sort of houses did these people live in? The foundations of most of the houses of Verulamium that were revealed by excavation have had to be covered up again, but many of the materials of which they were built have been preserved in the museum. The walls were of flint with brick bonding and brick quoins ; the roofs were of tiles or of stone slabs. Some fragments of painted plaster remain to show that sometimes the inside walls were highly coloured. Floors were made either of bricks arranged herring-bone fashion or, in the better rooms, of mosaics. Several complete mosaics are displayed in the museum : one, for instance, with a border of a Greek key pattern enclosing cups and roses and in the middle a sea god's head with crab's claws protruding from the hair. Mosaics are made of small cubes (*tesserae*) of stone or brick set in mortar, and at Verulamium the colours are white from the local chalk, red and yellow from bricks, black, blue and grey from limestone imported from Dorset. The doors of the houses had locks and keys and the windows had

glass held in place by small metal cross pieces. Water came from wells and some of it was brought in lead pipes. Old wells sometimes contain interesting wooden relics which have been preserved in the damp atmosphere. For instance in the Guildhall Museum, London, there are parts of a barrel and of several ladders which have come from wells.

The foundations of one house at Verulamium have been left uncovered to show how the Romans heated their rooms with a *hypocaust*. The bather sweated in a series of rooms of increasing heat, the *frigidarium*, the *tepidarium* and the *caldarium*. In the hottest room he was scraped with a *strigil*, massaged and anointed with oil, and then before going out he took a cold plunge. In this house the floor of the *tepidarium* is shown. At one side is the stokehold where the fire was; from there a brick tunnel carried the heat beneath the floor to the centre of the room and brick-lined channels brought it from the centre to the four corners, from which it rose up the walls in square flues.

Most Roman collections contain plenty of tableware and kitchen utensils, and the reader is referred to the lists on page 51 for suggestions of what to look for. The pottery of Verulamium, as of other places, is either coarse local pottery or so called 'Samian' ware imported from Gaul or the Rhineland (having nothing to do with the island of Samos) or Castor ware made in Northamptonshire. The Samian ware has a bright red gloss and is decorated with figures, human or animal, or with floral and geometric patterns. The Castor ware is black and is decorated with running patterns; hunting scenes with animals or scroll work, traced in relief on the surface like patterns on an iced cake. There is comparatively little glass ware at Verulamium, but at other places, such as York, there are considerable collections of glass tableware which was imported from the Rhineland.

The local pottery was used in the kitchen (Plate 1). Food was cooked on charcoal fires or raised masonry hearths like those found at Pompeii. Some food was fried in olive oil in a three-legged skillet; other food was stewed in a cooking pot with a lid or in an iron cauldron suspended over the fire by a chain. Vegetables were strained through a colander; tough meat was pounded in a pestle and mortar; wine, water and oil were stored in *amphorae*, jars and flagons. The Samian, Castor

ware and glass bowls, dishes and flasks were used in the dining-room. There is at Verulamium a photograph of a dining-room scene carved on a tombstone at Trier in Gaul. Two men are shown reclining at a table, while two women are sitting, one on a leather and the other on a basket chair; slaves are serving food from a side table. The food was usually served ready cut up so that it could be eaten with the fingers although small spoons and knives, like the ones in the Guildhall Museum were occasionally used. In wealthy households decorated metal-ware was used at table instead of pottery. Some pewter flagons and dishes survive but the most magnificent of all the tableware that has come down to us from Roman Britain is that found in Suffolk and now known as the Mildenhall Treasure. It is made of solid silver with embossed and incised decoration of foreign workmanship. The great dish, the plates, the bowls, the spoons and the goblets are as shining and polished as if they had been made yesterday and are magnificently displayed against a background of blue velvet in the British Museum.

There is much controversy about whether the Roman towns were abandoned when Britain ceased to be a province of the Empire or whether some of them at least were taken over by the Saxon invaders. From the Dark Ages has come a literary fragment called *The Ruin* which describes a Romano-British city that was evidently abandoned. 'There were splendid palaces, and many halls with water flowing through them, a wealth of gables towered aloft; loud was the clamour of the troops; many were the banqueting halls full of the joys of life, until all was shattered by mighty Fate. . . . Their defences became waste places, their fortifications crumbled; the troops who should have repaired them lay dead on the earth; and so these courts lie desolate, and the framework of the dome with its red arches sheds its tiles where of old many a warrior, joyous-hearted and radiant with gold shone resplendent in his war accoutrements, proud and flushed with wine. . . . There stood courts of stone, and a stream gushed forth in rippling floods of hot water. The wall enfolded within its bright bosom the whole place which contained the hot flood of the baths.'<sup>1</sup> The reference to the hot springs has been thought to indicate that the city was Bath.

<sup>1</sup> *The Cambridge Book of Prose and Verse*. Edited G. Sampson, Vol. 1.

Apart from this the description might well apply to Verulamium or to any other city after the end of the Pax Romana without whose shelter it was not possible for city life to flourish.

#### ROMAN VILLA OR COUNTRY ESTATE

Not all the Romano-British people lived in towns. Many lived in native villages like those excavated in Anglesey and in Wessex : these were clusters of round huts some, as at Woodcutts, Dorset, with painted plaster on the walls and a crude type of hypocaust. Some of the well-to-do people lived in the country estates that we know as villas. These houses were really self-supporting farms and there are numerous remains of them all over lowland Britain. Many of them such as Lockleys, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, developed from the native farms we considered in the last chapter. Some of them were built in one block with a veranda along the sunny side and with or without lateral wings at each end. A few, however, were built round courtyards like the luxury villas of the Romans in Italy.

Woodchester, Gloucestershire, is one of the finest of the courtyard villas ; it is so splendid in design and contains so many remains of extravagant decoration that it is thought that it may have belonged to some important Roman official. Its sheltered position under a hill and in beautiful wooded country accords very well with what Pliny and other Roman men of the world admired. Pliny's letters show that he appreciated natural beauty and that he arranged his rooms to have the best possible views of hills and sea and to make the most of the sun at all times of the year. At Woodchester most of the living quarters, floored with mosaics and heated by hypocausts, are grouped round an inner courtyard. Opening out of the courtyard on the north side is a magnificent hall, its roof supported by four central columns and its floor covered with one of the most elaborate mosaics in the country. The pattern of the mosaic is arranged in a series of concentric circles within a square. The central motif is lost but in the inner circle are the remains of the figure of Orpheus playing upon a lyre, with a procession of birds on either side of him while animals pace along in the outer circle. The zones of birds and animals are edged with bands of guilloche and floral wreaths ; there are nymphs in the four corners of the

square ; outside the arches and all round the design is a wide border of complicated geometric patterns. If the house did belong to a Roman official, it was perhaps in this impressive hall that he received his clients. Between the inner court and the larger outer court there are the remains of three extensive rooms containing fragments of coloured marble, Doric columns and many *tesserae* which suggest that they were highly decorated and perhaps used for conversation and debate when the owner was entertaining a large number of people. On one side of the outer courtyard were unheated rooms without mosaics, thought to have been the servants' rooms, and on the other side were the bathing rooms consisting of a dressing-room, and cold, warm and hot rooms each with the requisite hypocaust.

We do not know what the elevation of Woodchester was like; but from the villa of Hucclecote not far away has come, to the British Museum, a fragment of wall plaster with the scratched design of the gable end of a house. It shows a timber framework that might have been filled in with plaster and might have formed the upper part of a single-story building, the lower part of which was of stone. We must imagine the inside of the house decorated in much the same way as the houses of Verulamium, although at Woodchester the principal rooms had marble facings as well as painted plaster walls and mosaics on the floors. The kitchen and the dining-room would also have been like those at Verulamium only grander. We can get some idea of what was eaten from the record of animal remains at Hucclecote : these included red deer, rabbit, ox, sheep, pig, goose, domestic fowl, oyster, mussel and snail shells.<sup>1</sup> A simple dinner, taken from two menus given by Martial, might have consisted of *hors d'œuvre*, salad of mint, leeks and heather, followed by chopped eggs with shell-fish flavoured with rue, bacon and beans, chicken and ham, cabbage and sprouts, and for dessert, apples and pears.

In two villas excavated since 1945, evidence has been found to show that some villa owners were men of considerable culture. At Low Ham villa in Somerset the floor of the cold bathroom was covered with a mosaic pavement illustrating in brilliant polychrome the story of Dido and Aeneas, as told in Vergil's *Aeneid*

<sup>1</sup> The Romans ate not only *Helix pomatia*, now known as the Roman snail, but also *Helix aspersa*, a common garden snail.

Books I and IV. At Lullingstone villa in Kent the mosaics in the dining-room show the Rape of Europa by the bull, and Bellerophon, mounted upon Pegasus, killing the Chimaera. Such mosaics indicate that the owners had literary interests and went to a great deal of trouble to get 'high brow' designs for them even in such a remote place as Britain.

The Lullingstone villa also gives us a glimpse of the religion of villa owners. Here were found the portrait busts mentioned earlier, which were used in the cult of the dead, and also some very interesting fragments of wall paintings. These fragments have been fitted together like a jig-saw puzzle to form pictures which, though incomplete, show the Christian symbols of Chi Rho and Alpha and Omega and a figure with arms outstretched in the attitude of prayer. Such Christian symbols are very rare in Britain so it is a most exciting discovery and may mean that these paintings were once round the walls of a Christian chapel in the villa.

The villa was a self-supporting farm and grew its own food. At Woodchester there are the remains of farm buildings outside the outer courtyard. Unfortunately there is very little direct evidence of Roman field systems because the land used has been ploughed over ever since and all traces have been obliterated. An iron ploughshare and a coulter have been found at different villas, but we do not really know what the plough looked like except from sources outside the country. Virgil describes a plough in the *Georgics*.<sup>1</sup>

'Early in the woods the elm, by main force mastered, is bent  
Into a share beam and takes the shape of the curving plough:  
Then to its stock are fitted a pole eight feet in length  
And two earth boards, and the share head is set in its double  
back :

Light lime has been cut already for a yoke, and lofty beech  
To make the handle that guides the whole affair from behind,  
And the wood is hung up in chimneys where smoke will  
season it.'

The corn was reaped with an iron sickle sharpened on a whetstone. It was then threshed with a sledge studded underneath with sharp stones and weighted down with heavier stones lying

<sup>1</sup> From the translation by C. Day Lewis.

on the top; the sledge was dragged to and fro over the corn. These sledges are still used in Cyprus, and from a study there of the wear and tear on the teeth, archaeologists have been able to recognize an isolated tooth found in a Sussex villa as belonging to a sledge. Arturo Barea in his autobiography *The Forge*, described similar threshing floors in use near Madrid in the early twentieth century. They 'are little platforms paved with round blocks of stone, which [the threshers] sweep very carefully before throwing the sheaves on them. The threshing apparatus is drawn by a mule round and round over the carpet of ears. It is a heavy plate of sharp flints which passes over the wheat and separates the grain from the straw. . . . Farther off men toss up the straws and the crushed ears throwing them against the wind so that the chaff may be blown away, and the heavy grains left behind.' This helps us to imagine threshing and winnowing in Roman Britain. Virgil gives directions for making the threshing floor by rolling it and reinforcing it with chalk binding to prevent it from cracking and thus allowing weeds to grow up and vermin such as mice and weevils to get in. After threshing, the corn was dried in a drying kiln such as the one on the native village site on Thundersbarrow Hill, Sussex. It was spread on a barn floor under which ran a flue coming from a fire at the side. This drying prevented germination and mildew and produced a good flour at milling. The milling was carried out either in a rotary hand quern like those of the Iron Age or by a big horse-turned mill.

Virgil shows that the Romans, at any rate in Italy, had quite modern ideas of crop rotation, manuring, and rearing cattle and horses, and that they were expert at tending vines and olives, and the bees which provided the only form of sugar known to the ancient world. But there is also some rather miscellaneous archaeological information for other aspects of Roman farming. The bones of horse and ox are found in some museums and remind us that these were the chief draught animals. At Verulamium is the cheek bit of a horse's bridle, and an iron ox-goad. Both these animals drew wagons but all that remain of the wagons are the lynch pins which secured the wheels. Other surviving parts of farm implements include the head of a pitchfork and several iron rims of wooden spades from Verulamium.



In some villas small industries were carried on. In the villa at Chedworth in Gloucestershire evidence of dyeing in connection with the local wool production has been found.

The work on the farm was done by slaves. There is no reason to suppose that they were always cruelly treated though we do sometimes find a slave chain and manacle in a museum. We have already mentioned the freed slave woman from southern Britain whose Palmyrene master married her and when she died gave her a fine tombstone, now at South Shields. In the British Museum there is a marble plaque from Italy representing two freed slaves. Underneath one slave is written 'patrono fecit' meaning that he carved the plaque himself for his master because he had freed him and his friend.

The Anglo-Saxon pirates who landed in spite of Roman shore defences, did not appreciate the villas. At Hucclecote excavators found that in the fifth century the furnaces for the hypocausts had been abandoned in favour of the simpler but less efficient method of heating rooms by open fires which has persisted almost to the present day. We can imagine the Saxon raiders camping amid the ruins of mosaics and marble columns and feasting perhaps on the stores they found in the Roman larders and cellars.

#### CONCLUSION

The Roman occupation ceased in Britain because troops were withdrawn to try in vain to defend the rest of the Empire against the barbarians. Meanwhile there was a steadily increasing Anglo-Saxon infiltration into Britain. Archaeologists have found traces of these early raiders. A band of them who had penetrated as far as the Chilterns were overwhelmed in a struggle with the Romano-British and their bodies were flung into a Bronze Age barrow on Dunstable Downs. Their skeletons were discovered with their hands still behind their backs where they must have been tied when they were taken prisoner. The early Saxons were pagans and were buried with grave furniture. The most splendid burial was found at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk where some great king had been laid in a ship to transport him to the next world together with all his beautiful gold, enamelled and jewelled weapons. Although we, in this book, must end our study of

archaeological source material with the Romans, archaeology does not end there. You will find and can use archaeological specimens and field monuments of the kind we have been considering not only for prehistoric and Roman periods but also for Anglo-Saxon, medieval and even later times.

## ROMAN OBJECTS TO LOOK FOR IN MUSEUMS

### PERSONAL

*Clothes* : Very little remains except leather shoes.

*Jewelry* : Gold, silver and bronze bracelets ; bronze brooches sometimes ornamented with silver, gilt or enamel ; rings with designs on the bezel ; ear-ring ; necklet ; pendant ; buckle ; beads. Bone, bronze and silver pins.

*Toilet* : Bronze mirror ; iron strigil ; bronze spoon ; tweezers and nail cleaners ; bone comb and needles ; glass cosmetic and scent bottles.

### RELIGION AND BURIAL

Pottery or glass urns containing bones ; stone and lead coffins ; stone tombstones ; stone altar ; pots for votive offerings.

### AGRICULTURE

Stone rotary quern ; iron spade-shoe ; sickle, scythe, pruning hook, bill-hook, coulter, shears, bridle, pick, mattock, fork, bit, lynch pin, ox shoe. Neck and wrist shackles for slaves.

### INDUSTRY

*Tools* : Hammer, axe, awl, adze, punch, chisel, mattock, saw, plane, gouge, knife, brace and bit, auger, gimlet, pincers ; blacksmith's hammer and tongs ; mason's trowel, chisel, gouge, pick ; wooden spindle, lead and other whorls, stone and clay loom weights, bone needles, metal thimbles ; crucible and ingots of silver, copper, pewter ; lead pig, steelyard and scales for weighing ; coins and coin die.

### WAR

Parts of chain and scale armour ; bronze helmet, shield boss and scabbard fittings ; iron sword, dagger, head of throwing spear, head of catapult dart, arrow-heads ; stone balls for ballista.

### HOMES

*Architecture* : Square flue pipe ; roofing tiles ; fragments of wall plaster and wattle and daub, mosaic floor ; lead piping ; door locks and keys.

*Pottery* : Bowl, dish, plate, cup, vase, flagon, flask, bottle, storage jar, amphora for wine or oil ; cheese press ; colander ; infant's feeding bottle ; money box ; cooking pot with lid ; skillet ; pestle and mortar.

*Metal* : Bronze, silver or pewter bowl, dish, flagon, cup, goblet, spoon ; bronze saucepan (patella) ; iron pot hanger and cauldron ; iron knives of all sizes.

*Glass* : Amphora, bottle, flagon, flask, dish, beaker, cup, goblet. Lamps of bronze or pottery ; candlesticks, lantern.

*Writing materials* : bronze pen, pottery or bronze ink pots, iron stilus, wooden writing tablets.

## ROMAN FIELD MONUMENTS

### MILITARY FIELD MONUMENTS

*Marching camps* : earth ramparts, e.g. Strathmore.

*Signal stations* : stone towers on the Cumberland coast, round ditched platforms for wooden towers, e.g. Gask, Perthshire.

*Siege works* : e.g. Birrenswark, Dumfriesshire ; Bremenium, Northumberland.

*Defensive wall* : e.g. Hadrian's Wall (stone), Antonine Wall (earth).

*Road* : compacted chalk, gravel, small stones in south, stone paving in north. e.g. Watling Street, Fosse Way, Stane Street.

*Fort* : ramparts, permanent buildings including baths ; e.g. South Shields, Caistor.

*Legionary Fort* : e.g. York, Chester, Caerleon.

*Saxon Shore Fort* : e.g. Richborough, Reculver.

*Lighthouse* : one on east side of the harbour at Dover.

### DOMESTIC FIELD MONUMENTS

*Town* : wall, gates, cemetery, theatre, temple, city hall, houses, shops, grid plan of streets, e.g. Verulamium (St. Albans), Calleva Atrebatum (Silchester), Aquae Sulis (Bath), London.

*Villa or country estate* : plan of house, mosaic floor, bath, traces of farming, well. e.g. Chedworth and Woodchester, Glos., Bignor, Sussex ; Lullingstone, Kent ; Low Ham, Somerset.

*Aqueduct* : e.g. Dorchester, Dorset, open watercourse along hillside. Lincoln, water pumped from spring along water main with tiled pipe.

*Shrines* : e.g. temples at Banwell on Hadrian's Wall ; Weycock, Berks ; pilgrim sanctuary with guest house, baths, temple at Lydney, Glos.

*Barrows* : steep and conical in shape, often on roadside : e.g. Badbury Rings, Dorset ; Six Hills, Stevenage, on Ermine Street.

*Native settlements* : remains of wattle huts and of pits. e.g. Woodcutts, Dorset ; Ewe Close, Westmorland.

Fortified sites, e.g. hill-top town of Tre'r ceiri, Caernarvonshire ;

Caves in Derbyshire, Mendips and Devon have been found with Roman remains.

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### CHAPTER III

## CASTLES AND COUNTRY HOUSES

Castles and country houses to-day usually show features of several periods of building and interior decoration. It is usually best to decide which is the most important period and learn to recognize its style. We shall want to know how people lived at that time so that we can imagine the garrison defending the castle or the family sitting down to dinner. Sometimes this can be deduced from careful study of the building and its contents but usually we have also to go to contemporary portraits, journals, account books and inventories and to museums with furniture and tableware, in order to complete the picture.

### MEDIEVAL CASTLES

Before we visit a castle we have to search among contemporary sources and to use a good deal of imagination to produce a picture of its appearance in medieval times—a warlike scene which is very different from the peaceful ruin which we now see guarded by a single custodian. Most castles are in ruins now because the need for them passed away several centuries ago. In the Middle Ages kings built castles to hold down a conquered country, and local lords put in charge of them in times of war sometimes built up petty kingdoms. The Civil War in the seventeenth century was the last time when most castles were fortified. Caernarvon, for instance, was garrisoned for the king and three times besieged. After the war it was ordered to be dismantled. Fortunately the order was not carried out and although the building was neglected until its recent restoration, it is still possible to see from it how a medieval royal fortress was defended.

Caernarvon castle was built, on the site of an earlier castle, by Edward I as part of his scheme for the conquest of Wales and before visiting it, it is useful to know something of its history and of the kind of people who attacked and defended it.

In 1282, in the second campaign against Llewellyn the Great Edward's army defeated and killed Llewellyn and sent his head to be displayed on the Tower of London, while the Welsh bards bewailed the loss of their leader. It was in this campaign that Edward first used the long bow, the value of which he had learnt in earlier campaigns against the South Welsh whose chief weapon it was. His army consisted largely of a feudal levy of mailed knights riding heavy mailed chargers. Effigies and brasses of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries showing the armour of these knights can be found in churches: for instance Sir John D'Aubernoun of Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey is shown wearing mail from head to foot, a surcoat and *cuir-bouilli*<sup>1</sup> knee-caps; he carries a spear for use in the charge and the long sword and the small shield used for hand fighting. Supporting the knights in this campaign there were about 1,500 crossbowmen, mainly mercenaries from Gascony. Crossbowmen were highly trained forces and were usually hired professional soldiers, often foreigners who were disliked by the English. The crossbow continued in use after the Middle Ages and later examples can be found in museums. The knights and the crossbowmen were supported by about 15,000 foot soldiers, some armed with long-bows and some with spears. Of these some would have been Welshmen captured on the first campaign against Llewellyn and forced into the service of the king.

The Welsh army was quite different from the English army. The Welsh relied on guerilla warfare. They were difficult to find in their mountains and marshes, and their chief method of attack was to ambush convoys. Their armour and methods are well described by Giraldus Cambrensis<sup>2</sup> who, writing at the beginning of the thirteenth century, said 'They make use of light arms which do not impede their agility, small coats of mail, bundles of arrows and long lances, helmets and shields. . . . The higher class go to battle mounted on swift and generous steeds, which their country produces; but the greater part of the people fight on foot on account of the marshy nature and the unevenness of the soil. . . . Their mode of fighting consists in chasing the enemy or in retreating. This light-armed people, relying more on their activity

<sup>1</sup> Leather hardened by being boiled.

<sup>2</sup> *The Itinerary through Wales*. Giraldus Cambrensis. (Everyman.)

than on their strength, cannot struggle for the field of battle, enter into close engagement or endure long and severe actions' . . . yet 'neither oppressed by hunger or cold, nor fatigued by martial labour, nor despondent in adversity, but ready, after a defeat, to return immediately to action . . . they are as easy to overcome in a single battle as they are difficult to subdue in a protracted war'.

Edward with his mailed knights and crossbowmen succeeded in January 1283, in capturing Dolwyddelan which opened the way to Conway down the Conway valley, to Caernarvon over Llanberis Pass and to Harlech through the valley of Ffestiniog. In this year in order to hold down the newly-conquered territory, he began to build castles at these three points. Between 1283 and 1292 the building accounts of Caernarvon show that the south and east walls facing the river and a wooden barricade and moat on the north side had been built for the castle and that the town wall to the north of the castle had also been completed. The castle was garrisoned by knights and crossbowmen. It is recorded<sup>1</sup> that 120 crossbows and large quantities of bolts were sent to Caernarvon in 1284. William of Grandison, who supervised the building in 1290-2, sent in an account<sup>1</sup> 'for 300 shafts for the crossbows, wax, leather, varnish, cord and divers other things bought for the King's artillery at Caernarvon', and for paying men to keep the gates and fortify the town against the rebellious Welsh.

In 1294 in spite of walls and garrison the castle was overrun by the Welsh under Madoc ap Llewellyn. Hordes of spearmen rushed in over the new town walls, crossed the moat, broke through the wooden barrier and burnt all the living quarters inside the castle. The damage they did was considerable and Edmond, son of King Henry III, writing to John de Langton in 1295<sup>1</sup> 'orders that Langton should with all speed procure from all parts up to a hundred stone cutters and cause them to come to Caernarvon to Master Walter de Ambresbury who is there to repair the castle and walls of the town'. It was then that the northern walls of the castle and the very heavily fortified King's and Queen's Gates were built in stone.

<sup>1</sup> Calendar of Ancient Correspondence concerning Wales. Translated J. G. Edwards.

With this historical background in mind we can now visit the castle itself (Fig. 8). We notice that both the castle and the medieval town stand on a promontory bounded by the Menai Straits on the east and the River Seiont on the south. The line of the town walls is still visible in parts, and the position of the river Cadnant, now underground, is indicated along the north and west walls of the town by the street called Bank Quay, showing that in the Middle Ages the site was practically an island. If we first look at the castle from across the river Seiont, we see the southern walls, splayed at the foot to afford greater strength, with four multangular towers and, on the right, the Queen's Gate. There are two rows of arrow slits in the walls which, with the battlements, made it possible for three tiers of crossbowmen to be shooting at attackers at once. Beside the Queen's Gate the walls can be seen to spring not from the level ground but from the top of a mound; this can also be seen inside and is all that remains of the motte or artificial mound on which the Norman castle had been built.

We pass from the southern river front, round the western walls, through the town walls and see, just beyond Eagle Tower, a break in the course of masonry marking a change in construction between the walls built before and those built after Madoc's rebellion. We then go along the north wall beside the moat to the modern bridge leading across to the King's Gate. Traces of the heavy fortifications put up after the rebellion can still be detected. The drawbridge over the moat is marked by bearings; the places for five successive doors and six portcullisses are marked by bar-holes and grooves. In the space between each door arrow-holes command the approach from different levels, and still visible in the vaulting above are nine murder-holes down which the defenders could throw heavy stones or boiling pitch on to the attackers. It is not surprising that the Welsh did not succeed in forcing an entrance a second time. In the upper part of the gatehouse the Constable of the Castle lived. Two of the portcullisses came up through the floor of his chapel which indicates that they must have been kept down, and therefore shut, most of the time. Above the chapel was a dining-hall with small slit windows facing outwards and large windows with window seats facing into the courtyard.





Inside the castle courtyards we can see the remains of some of the domestic buildings. The springings of a great arch and the foundations of the kitchen exist against one of the curtain walls. The water supply came from the Well Tower. The well is on the ground floor and beside it is the stone seating for a lead-lined cistern which could be kept filled by buckets raised from the well. From this cistern pipes ran through the thickness of the walls to supply the kitchens where one of the stone troughs still remains. The garrison would have dined in the great hall of which only the foundations now remain.

When we start exploring the passages which run at an upper and a lower level through all the curtain walls we shall find that the towers are set across the walls so that if one part of the castle were taken the invaders could be prevented, by the shutting of the tower doors, from spreading all over the castle along the passages. Each of the nine towers is more or less the same in construction so we will look in detail at the Eagle Tower, which was the biggest. It has a basement and three stories. The basement communicated directly with the Water Gate which, though it was never finished, was defended by a portcullis and double doors and was intended as an entrance for those arriving at Caernarvon by water. There is only one arrow slit window in the basement and the embrasure of it is 18 feet in depth which indicates the thickness of the walls and the impossibility of penetrating them. The ground-floor chamber, which like all those in the tower is ten sided, has a large hooded fireplace and in the thickness of the walls many small octagonal and hexagonal rooms which were probably used as sleeping quarters. The small room opposite the entrance to the ground-floor chambers contained the machinery for raising the portcullis of the postern into the courtyard, and the passage in the north wall would have led to a similar room over the Water Gate. A small room on the south-east was probably a chapel. The first-floor chamber was the main apartment. It has the same kind of wall accommodation and another chapel but it is better lighted. There are two similar apartments above, and then if we continue up the spiral stairs we arrive at the battlements. Behind these the crossbowmen must have crouched, shooting their bolts in a vain attempt to stop Madoc's spearmen from sweeping in over the moat and the

then wooden northern walls. From here we can see the layout of the whole castle: the nine towers astride the curtain walls, the two great gateways and, inside, the foundations of kitchen and hall. We can also look out to the north and see the remains of the wall which encircled the tiny medieval town that grew up under the shelter of the great castle and was the seat of the government of North Wales from 1284.

Caernarvon is a particularly elaborate example of a castle built at a time when the art of fortification had reached its peak, but there are many other castles all over the country. Many of them are more or less in ruins from neglect or demolition, but in each of them we can find some of the features noticed at Caernarvon and for each we can find contemporary illustrations of soldiers and battles. For the background of Norman castles such as Rochester in Kent or Castle Hedingham in Essex there are illustrations of armour, weapons and fighting in the Bayeux Tapestry. For fifteenth-century castles there are descriptions in the *Paston Letters* of the sieges of castles. Illuminations in manuscripts often show battles and sieges, and effigies and brasses from the end of the thirteenth century show the armour worn by knights. From these it is possible to construct a picture of life in a medieval castle.

#### MEDIEVAL AND TUDOR HOUSES

Haddon Hall in the County of Derbyshire, belongs to the Duke of Rutland. It is an example of a country house whose buildings date from several periods. It contains a large number of rooms some of which bear traces of their past history, and to avoid confusion it is best in this and other houses of the same type to concentrate on not more than two main periods. It is better to look thoroughly at a few rooms and try to get an impression of the life lived in them than to attempt to sort out the chronology of many rooms. (Fig. 9)

Haddon Hall can be studied either as a medieval manor house or as an Elizabethan mansion. If we think of it first of all as a medieval manor house we shall notice from afar its fine position half way up the hillside above the river, and as we get nearer shall see the battlemented walls with few small windows. We enter by the old gate under Peverel's Tower. This tower is

flanked by two battlemented bastions and above the doorway there are still visible the corbels which once supported a footway across from one bastion to another. No doubt through the floor of this, quicklime could have been poured to discourage unwelcome visitors! It seems however that Haddon had a distinctly peaceable history and owes its preservation to the fact that it was never fully fortified and was never attacked. None the less every medieval

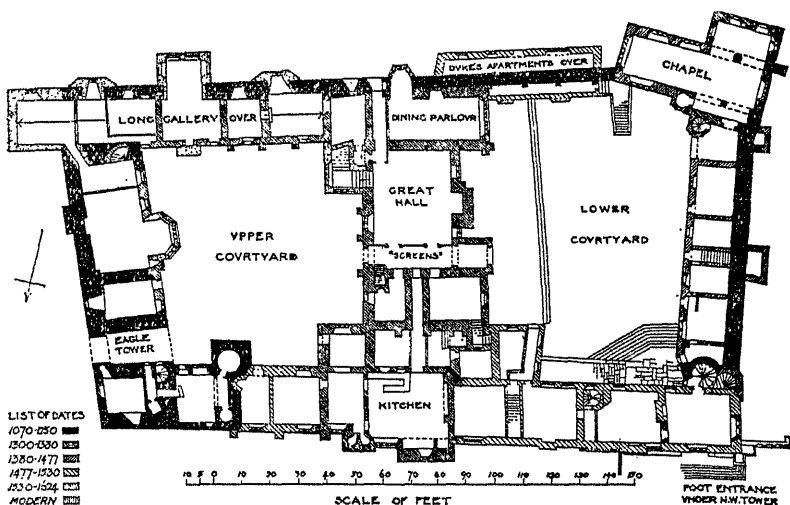


FIG. 9. Haddon Hall. Based on a plan by E. G. Wyllie.

house has some defensive features and at Haddon we can see, for instance, that there are more windows facing into the courtyard than there are on the outside walls which are thicker than the inside walls.

In a medieval manor house the most important part of the building was the Hall and many houses like Haddon still retain the word hall in their names. The hall at Haddon, as in most other houses of the period, is in the range of buildings dividing the two courtyards round which the house is built. The hall is entered through the screens passage which has doors on the left into the hall and on the right into the kitchens. The screens protected the hall itself from the worst draughts. We can tell from the two-light quatrefoil-headed windows that the hall

already existed in the fourteenth century although there have been many later additions. The screens have the perpendicular panelling with cinquefoils at the head characteristic of the fifteenth century. The open rafter roof is a modern reconstruction of the fifteenth-century roof. The hall was heated by a wood fire in the hooded fireplace which remains, but even so it was probably very cold in winter. The windows may have been filled by glass or horn, but more likely simply had shutters. At meals the family and their guests sat at the high table on the dais at the far end and the servants sat at tables down the length of the hall. In the Middle Ages the walls were either plastered and painted or hung with tapestries like the fifteenth century flowered French example that hangs over the high table now. The floor would have been covered with rushes.

If we want to see what the dining-table looked like we shall have to turn to a contemporary illuminated manuscript such as Queen Mary's Psalter which is in the British Museum. This psalter contains a picture for the month of January showing two men and a woman at table. The table is spread with a cloth and several articles of tableware. Each person has a pile of bread instead of a plate but there is only one knife between them. People either brought their own knives or ate with their fingers which meant that they had to wash their hands between courses. Two ewers are shown which might have held water but the basins for washing were probably brought by servants as they were needed. There are three standing dishes, late examples of which can sometimes be found in museums. Two of these seem to contain poultry and one a fish. One covered cup for wine stands on the table and another is being brought by a servant. Silver or silver-gilt cups were the drinking vessels of the wealthy, mazers were used by the well-to-do and drinking horns by this time were kept only for ceremonial occasions. Anyone who did not drink fairly with the rest was liable to be punished; on the screen at Haddon Hall is a fetterlock into which the offender's wrist was put while someone poured ale up his sleeve as a punishment! One of the most important objects on the dining-table was the salt whose contents made tasty the dried and sometimes rather stale food. It is difficult in pictures to distinguish a salt from a covered wine cup but in the psalter there appears to be

an hour-glass-shaped object which might be a salt not unlike some salts now to be seen in museums.

The other important rooms in a medieval house led off from the hall. At Haddon the kitchen is reached by a long passage from the screens and it may originally have been detached from the main block. In the Middle Ages the rafter roof probably had a hole for the escape of the smoke but now it has a ceiling to accommodate a room above. The fittings include the open fire-places where huge joints and whole animals were roasted on spits, the wall ovens where the bread was baked, the timber block where pigs fattened on the estate were cut up and the wooden bath in which they were salted to last through the winter. Large households entertained extensively and we can imagine this kitchen as once containing a large number of utensils, perhaps including some like those listed in the 1459 inventory of Sir John Fastolf's kitchen at Caistor Castle which is given in the *Paston Letters*.<sup>1</sup> This list includes fifteen brass pots and a cauldron for seething and stewing, four spits for roasting, a wooden sieve, a pestle and brass mortar, a frying-pan, two ladles, two brass skimmers and three brass pike pans.

At the high-table end of the hall there is a door with a hatch leading down to the cellars where food and wine were stored, and an Elizabethan staircase leading to the lord's apartments. In the Middle Ages this was one large room called the solar but in Tudor times it was divided into two (see below). In the solar the owner of the house had some privacy and the scene for the month of February in Queen Mary's Psalter might well have taken place here. A man who has just come in, perhaps from a hunting or hawking expedition, is shown sitting on a draped bed before a roaring fire while his servant helps him to change his stockings. His wife might have joined him later to make her toilet with the aid of an ivory-backed mirror and an ivory comb. In the solar we can again use the inventory from Caistor Castle to give us an idea of what might have been there. In the main bedroom at Caistor there was a feather bed with tapestry hangings and canopy, a mattress, a bolster, two blankets and a pair of sheets. There were also several wall hangings and some cushions, two chairs (which were rather rare in the Middle Ages as most

<sup>1</sup> 3 volume edition: see bibliography.

people sat on stools or benches) and a hanging pewter candlestick. In other bedrooms are mentioned a basin and ewer for washing and a servant's running bed which in the day time was put under the big bed.

No medieval house was complete without a chapel, and the chapel at Haddon is interesting for its fifteenth-century mural paintings which have an all-over tapestry pattern of foliage, flowers and trees with animals peering out of them and St. Christopher wading through a rippling stream full of fishes. The chapel would have had the usual plate such as is found in parish churches (see Chapter 4). This chapel originally served also as the parish church of the village which grew up under the shelter of the walls of the great house.

These then are the main medieval rooms which still exist at Haddon though from a plan of the house it can be seen that even in the fourteenth century there were many others. Before leaving the medieval buildings it is worth recalling that in the Middle Ages the estate must have been a self-supporting unit which produced its own food. Illuminated manuscripts illustrate very well the farmer's year. For instance the Luttrell Psalter, at the British Museum, has pictures of men ploughing with oxen and a wooden plough, of harrowing, sowing and carting after the harvest. The Bedford Hours show the pruning of trees in spring and haymaking in the summer. Queen Mary's Psalter has a picture for November of beating down acorns to fatten the pigs and a picture for December of slaughtering the pigs that could not be kept alive through the winter. To judge by the later accounts and by the situation of Haddon it seems probable that there was a good deal of sheep farming; in which case May would have been the month for sheep shearing. No doubt the peasants from the village helped on the Haddon estate in return for their strip of land. Perhaps they had a Reeve like Chaucer's Reeve who tried to make profits from his dealings between lord and peasant.

Medieval furniture and tableware is scarce, and contemporary documents are not often available for a given place, therefore a good deal of the reconstruction has to be conjectured from analogous sources, but in Elizabethan times we are on firmer ground for both material and written remains.

There are some published extracts from the Steward's

Accounts<sup>1</sup> at Haddon Hall for 1549, 1564 and 1618 onwards and also some Elizabethan Household Accounts from the Duke of Rutland's other estate at Belvoir.<sup>2</sup> These accounts are most valuable in helping us to reconstruct a picture of life at Haddon Hall in Elizabethan times.

Wealthy Elizabethans dressed in brightly coloured clothes made of embroidered fabrics, silks and satins, and we can imagine for this period ladies in farthingales and men in doublet and hose walking through the hall. To help us the bailiff's accounts mention various clothes bought: in 1549 a pair of hose for Miss Dorothy and five yards of linen for two shirts for Henry Vernon. The servants also had to be well dressed: in 1564 were bought nine score yards of white frieze for liveries and shoes for the kitchen boys and for the French boy; in 1628 the beadsmen who said prayers in the chapel had to have fifteen yards of blue cloth. By 1631-2 we get more detailed descriptions of the clothes in the accounts. 'For a gown, petticoat and waistcoat for Miss, the gown being trimmed with silver lace, a mantle of wrought satin, swaddling bands, sleeves and waistcoat for a child' and another entry 'for a gorgette, French bands, quoif and pinner, white tafeta and silver lace for a gown, petticoat and waistcoat, gloves, looking-glass, combs, silk stockings, pins, etc., for my Mrs.' Therefore although there are no contemporary portraits at Haddon we can get some idea of the kind of clothes the family and their retainers were wearing in these years.

The hall was still the main dining-room. The family and guests sat at the high table which still remains and the servants sat in the body of the hall as before. Harrison in his *Description of England* in 1577 gives instructions for servants, 'Lay every man a trencher, a napkin and a spoon. . . and some do use to set before every man a loaf of bread and his cup . . . notice if your master is used to wash at table or standing and cast a clean towel on your table-cloth and set down your basin and ewer before him.' The Haddon accounts for 1564 show that there was much entertaining at Christmas. There are several payments for minstrels and players, and four sets of plates, dishes, etc., had to

<sup>1</sup> Selections from the Steward's Accounts preserved at Haddon Hall, by W. Carrington. Printed by Bembrose and Sons, Ltd., Derby. Out of print. The spelling of the extracts quoted here has been modernized.

<sup>2</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission.



be hired and brought on horseback to Haddon. Many rounds of beef must have been sliced up on the carving table with the circular runnel which we can still see.

We can imagine the great oak table set with silver gilt when the Elizabethans dined (see plate 3). At Belvoir a standing cup and cover of gilt and a gilt bowl with a cover were bought in 1596. The present Duke of Rutland possesses a ewer of 1575 and a basin of 1571, probably of French workmanship, which are set with agate and have Renaissance arabesque ornament. He also owns one of the earliest surviving English forks, which is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum: it has two prongs and the hall-mark 1632.

The sixteenth-century steward's accounts give a good idea of what was eaten at Haddon. Some of the most frequent items to be bought were chickens, small birds, snipe, woodcock, plovers; freshwater, salted and sometimes sea fish; white bread; wine, ale; and immense quantities of beef and veal. Spices and preserves included sugar, pepper, prunes, raisins, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, mace and saffron. Some of these things were obtained near at hand but fish and wine were got at Chesterfield, and by the early seventeenth century many of the groceries were brought in bulk from London. Mention is often made of getting in food especially for guests. In 1549 entries are made 'for the costs [of two men] to Derby and Harleston for wildfowl against my Lord Talbot's coming' and 'for the carriage of a roulet of claret wine from Manchester for my Lord Talbot.'

In Tudor and Jacobean times important additions were made to Haddon Hall. In the early sixteenth century the medieval solar was divided into the two rooms that we see now, the Great Chamber and the Parlour. The decoration here is of the transition style between the medieval and the Renaissance. The Parlour has perpendicular windows but it has a painted wooden ceiling instead of a medieval open roof. The oak panelling has a Gothic cresting of crenellations and quatrefoils but the frieze panels have among the Vernon heraldry, a Renaissance medallion of a helmeted warrior and a man and woman in costume of 1545 who may be Sir George and Lady Vernon. The Great Chamber with its bay window and sixteenth-century panelled fireplace has a plaster relief with Renaissance motifs of winged cherubs, dragon-

headed scrolls and arabesques. Below the frieze the walls are hung with tapestries.

The Great Chamber was a bedroom but there is very little furniture in it now except a chest and a stool. The Haddon accounts only mention the weaving of a coverlet and payment for sewing sheets, napkins and towels for my lady, so it is not easy to imagine what it was like in the sixteenth century. The Belvoir accounts for 1596-7 have an entry for a 'walnut tree bedstead and a walnut tree table' and '42 yards of ash coloured damask for a bed and counterpoint.' Oak was a more usual wood than walnut for sixteenth-century four-poster beds and there are examples of oak bedsteads in museums and in other period houses. No complete bed hangings for this period remain although there are many fragments of embroidery which might have formed part of curtains or valance.

A highly characteristic addition to the house in Elizabethan and Jacobean times was the Long Gallery. In the Long Gallery at Haddon there are great windows of mullioned and transomed lights on each side and at the end of the gallery. The panelling is thoroughly Renaissance in character: pilasters and semi circular arches extend its whole length and the dado is ornamented with alternate jointed fret and cut card strapwork patterns. The plaster ceiling is not so elaborate as those in some great houses but it has the characteristic all-over pattern of slender ribs forming squares, diamonds and quatrefoils and containing coats of arms. There are none of the highly decorated overmantels that we might expect to find in a room such as the Long Gallery but in a room in the east wing there is a plaster modelled overmantel of Orpheus playing his lute to the animals among whom are the peacock and the boar from the Manners and Vernon crests.<sup>1</sup>

In this Long Gallery the family probably used to exercise or make music on wet days, or perhaps play cards or dice for which debts are frequently entered in the accounts. It is now almost empty of furniture but an inventory of 1621 includes chairs, couches, stools covered in black, red and green stuff, table carpets and cushions for the window seats and hard chairs, an

<sup>1</sup> Haddon Hall, like many other great houses, belonged to different families at different times during its long history. It belonged to the Vernons until 1567 when it passed to the Manners through Dorothy Vernon, wife of John Manners, the second son of the first Earl of Rutland.

organ, two harpsichords and a cupboard of viols. These articles of furniture have disappeared but we can find others like them in museums. Embroidery stitched by the ladies of the household was made into table covers and cushion covers and the examples that survive in museums have scenes of daily life or from the Bible or patterns with roses, honeysuckle, cornflowers, insects, birds and animals in rich profusion. The chairs, tables and stools mentioned in the inventory were probably made of oak and would have had patterns such as we have seen in the Long Gallery panelling. Here or in the hall might have been a court cupboard in which to keep the silver.

Before we leave Haddon Hall it is worth glancing at the accounts for 1549 for the glimpse they give us of how the estate was run. There are a great many entries concerned with sheep: piece-rate wages for helping at lambing and shearing times, for people to brand the sheep and to wash them and for the buying and selling of sheep. Other entries mention different aspects of the estate: a payment for a pair of hedging mittens reminds us that the sixteenth century was a period of enclosure of fields: there are payments for scythe stones for the mowers, for a man who killed rats and mice, for winnowing corn and for thatching. In the house and outbuildings there were always odd repairing jobs to be done: mending the glass windows in the house, making a new furnace in the brewhouse, carrying water to the cistern for two days. Far away on the High Peak a reward was paid to the keepers for a stag to be killed there, and there were numerous scattered payments for game brought in. In 1618 a payment was made for a tame doe to be given to Mr. Henry Vernon and a little later two bells were provided for this pet. In the same year Richard the Falconer is paid for bells, jesses, hood, lure and bag.

Haddon Hall and its accounts give us a good picture of Elizabethan life but as a building the house is by no means complete in its Elizabethan and Jacobean features. At Aston Hall, a beautiful Jacobean house in Birmingham, now standing in an area of mean streets, we can find an Elizabethan bed and inlaid chest, a stone carved mantelpiece in the long gallery and a great staircase with tall newell posts and a pierced balustrade. Yet even Aston Hall, though it was all built between 1618 and

1635, has now not enough Jacobean furniture to complete all its rooms and therefore we find an eighteenth-century dining room and a Victorian bedroom. It is the same with most period houses, especially early ones. Our ancestors, like ourselves, hated to be thought old fashioned and much old furniture has succumbed to change of taste as well as to wear and tear of time.

#### SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY HOUSES

Wilton House, the seat of Lord Pembroke, in Wiltshire, contains, like Haddon Hall, work of several periods. It is built round a quadrangle which retains the plan of the medieval nunnery which was the first building on the site. The buildings include a small twelfth-century stone court from this nunnery, the east entrance of the Tudor house which was much altered in the eighteenth century, the mid-seventeenth-century state-rooms, the eighteenth-century bridge and the early nineteenth-century Gothic revival cloister gallery. Much the most important of these buildings is the south front begun by Inigo Jones in 1647 and finished by his pupil John Webb in 1653. It is one of the earliest examples of the Italian style in England; it has a flat roof, balustraded above the cornice, the windows are sashed with either pediments or architraves and the central window is round-headed, of marked Venetian character and is surmounted by two reclining figures in stone. This southern block contains the magnificent state-rooms with original seventeenth-century decoration in the French style. It is therefore the second half of the seventeenth century that we will try to reconstruct at Wilton.

Celia Fiennes visited the house between 1685 and 1696 and she admired the pictures in the hall, the state-rooms well furnished with velvet and damask, the family portraits and the marble chimney-pieces. The state-rooms of the south front consist of the Colonnade room, the Double Cube room and the Single Cube room. Here the splendid white and gold decoration remains in all its original exuberance of pendants and swags of fruit and foliage, and the ceiling in the Double Cube room retains its glowing colours. In the Double Cube room there is a magnificent series of Van Dyck family portraits which were part of the original scheme. We can imagine these people dining here when the room

was new. The great family group on the west wall shows the fourth Earl of Pembroke in black court dress with falling lace collar, his second wife in a black *décolleté* dress with lace cuffs and his sons and daughters in coloured silks and satins. Unfortunately the furniture that this generation used no longer exists; what we see was made specially for the room in the eighteenth century. We have rich seventeenth-century decoration and wonderful family portraits but no contemporary furniture. We have therefore to turn to the records and are lucky enough to find that there survives in the muniment room at Wilton an (unpublished) inventory made in 1683 at the death of the 'bad' seventh Earl, so called because he died abroad and in debt. There is no portrait of him at the house but there is one of his wife, Henriette de Querouaille, in the Single Cube room.

In the seventeenth century instead of the whole household dining together as in Elizabethan days, the family dined with their guests probably in the Double Cube room and the servants had separate dining quarters near the kitchen. The list of silver plate in the inventory is not very extensive considering the size of the house but this may be accounted for by the fact that the seventh Earl was a spendthrift. There were fourteen dishes, four dozen plates, twenty-two spoons, one dozen knives, ten forks, one dozen small salts, one standing salt, one mustard pot and numerous candlesticks, some with snuffers and pans. The list of linen gives dinner napkins, table-cloths and side-board cloths of linen and damask. We can see a considerable change from Elizabethan days. As forks were more common and people no longer had to eat with their fingers, there was less need for washing the hands after each course in a basin and ewer brought round by the servant. The great salt was giving way to smaller salts and the wine cup to the wine glass. The inventory also mentions tankards for beer, porringers for *bovillon* or clear soup and a caudle cup for drinking caudle or spiced cream curdled with wine or ale which was thought to be nourishing for invalids. For less grand occasions or perhaps for the superior servants there was pewter tableware.

The inventory is also useful in telling us how the bedrooms were furnished and it gives us a list of the furniture for what is now called the Colonnade Room but what was in the seventeenth

century the state bedroom or the King's Room. The furnishings were suitably rich; the tapestry hangings were worth £420, the bed was the usual type with no springs but it had gold coloured damask curtains, counterpane and upholstery and there were six elbow chairs and six back chairs covered with the same material. There was a down bed (instead of the more ordinary feather bed) and two satin quilts. The bed would have been made with the fine linen (holland) sheets and pillow cases also listed in the inventory, and damask towels were probably put out for the royal visitors. Perhaps the silver warming pan and the four silver basins listed under plate were kept for the king's use. The window curtains were made of damask and there was a large looking-glass, four red and white satin cushions, two cloth-of-silver cushions and a floor carpet. The fire irons were of brass as in most of the rooms. In 'the little room within the King's Room' which was possibly behind the columns, there were more tapestries, an elbow chair and four stools upholstered in flowered satin, a tapestry carpet probably for use as a table cover and a side table.

Bathrooms were coming into fashion at this time. There was one next to the Duchess's bedchamber at Ham House, Surrey, and Celia Fiennes described the marble bathroom at Chatsworth. She said that the bath 'was as deep as one's middle on the outside and you went down steps into the bath big enough for two people; at the upper end are two cocks to let in, one hot, the other cold water to atemper it as persons please.'

We can already see how much more furniture there was at this time than in medieval and Tudor times. In other bedrooms at Wilton, in addition to the pieces already given, sometimes a cupboard or a hanging press is mentioned and occasionally we are told what kind of wood an article is made of. Walnut and inlaid woods were now more fashionable than oak. In 'my lady's chamber' there was a stool and a side table of walnut, a looking-glass with a marquetry frame and a pendulum clock in a case. The writer of the inventory counted one hundred and eleven beds in the house. This included beds for the family and guests which probably had linen sheets, and beds for the servants which probably had coarse canvas sheets.

We might imagine in at least one of the bedrooms of the

house a dressing table such as Pope described in the early eighteenth century in *The Rape of the Lock*.

‘And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displayed,  
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.

This casket India’s glowing gems unlocks,  
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.  
The tortoise here and elephant unite,  
Transform’d to combs, the speckled, and the white.  
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,  
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.’

There are some very rich dressing sets dating from the late seventeenth century and now in museums. Perhaps one of the ladies of Wilton had a silver toilet service like the Calverley service which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is made of solid silver embossed with floral and figure patterns.

Now that we have had a glimpse of the people and the places they lived in, we can look more carefully at the outside of the house and at the grounds which were laid out for the pleasure of the numbers of guests that were entertained.

We enter the house to-day by the east front which, in the early nineteenth century when the north entrance was made, became the garden entrance. In the seventeenth century this east entrance was the main one. Carriages drove from the gate in the wall, alongside a canal which has now gone, through two courtyards also gone, and right through the hall entrance where we now buy our tickets, into the quadrangle round which the house is built and up to the Holbein porch<sup>1</sup> which led into the great hall.

In the lower part of the cloisters there are plans showing this layout of the grounds, and in the upper part of the cloisters there is a topographical view of Wilton in the early eighteenth century before the garden was landscaped. In this picture (attributed to Knyff), we can see the carriages coming through the courtyards on the east side and also the large formal garden on the south side. Now the Inigo Jones south front looks out over a smooth lawn with cedar trees, across the river to fields

<sup>1</sup> This porch has been moved out into the grounds where it may still be seen.

and woods, but in the seventeenth century the river was underground and from the windows of the staterooms the view<sup>1</sup> was of a rectangular walled garden criss-crossed by paths. The first part of the walled garden contained a parterre of low hedges forming a geometric pattern on a background of coloured gravels. Then there were trees, covered walks, a terrace and beyond an endless vista of intersecting paths leading to a wood. Celia Fiennes<sup>2</sup> said, 'The gardens are very fine, with many gravel walks with grass squares set with fine brass and stone statues, with fish ponds and basins with figures in the middle spouting out water, dwarf trees of all sorts and a fine flower garden, much wall fruit. . . . There are fine woods beyond the house and a large park walled in.'

In the lower part of the Knyff picture there are elevations of the seventeenth-century grotto. This grotto is shown in an eighteenth-century picture by Richard Wilson to have been across the river behind the early eighteenth-century Palladian bridge, but it is now in the woods to the east of the house and is lived in by part of the family. The Knyff picture shows the façade with pillars and foliage decoration and the central fountain inside. Celia Fiennes said that just outside the grotto there was a wooden bridge over the river. The bridge had pairs of lions along either balustrade, each lion spouting water across to his opposite number so that they made together a continuous arch of water along the whole length of the bridge. She also gives a graphic description of the amusement provided for the guests of Lord Pembroke inside the grotto. 'In the middle room is a round table, a large pipe in the midst, on which they put a crown or a gun or a branch, and so it spouts the water through the carvings and points all round the room at the artist's pleasure to wet the company; there are figures at each corner of the room that can weep water on the beholders, and by a straight pipe on the table they force up the water into the hollow carving of the roof . . . and [it] descends in a shower of rain all about the room; on each side is two little rooms which by the turning of their wires the water runs into the rocks you see . . . , and also

<sup>1</sup> In Ralph Dutton's book, *The English Garden* there is a reproduction of a bird's-eye view of the formal garden published in 1615 by de Caux, its maker.

<sup>2</sup> Quotations are taken from *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, edited by C. Morris. The spelling is modernized.



it is so contrived in one room that it makes the melody of nightingales and all sorts of birds which engaged the curiosity of strangers to go in to see.'

Houses with seventeenth-century decoration like Wilton rarely have much contemporary furniture<sup>1</sup> but they often have family portraits so that we can see what people looked like at different times during the history of the house. For the furniture and the tableware it is usually necessary to look at published inventories or household accounts of the owners or of people of similar rank and to visit museums where this furniture and plate are displayed. Ham House near London is unique in retaining much of its seventeenth-century furniture, in possessing an inventory of 1679 and in being in the care of the Victoria and Albert Museum which can supply other contemporary furniture similar to that listed in the inventory. This house is on a smaller, more intimate scale than Wilton but much can be learnt from it and from its guidebook of seventeenth-century house furnishings in general. The layout of many formal gardens is excellently illustrated in Kip's views of country houses mostly made about 1700 and some of them as we have seen are described in Celia Fiennes's Journal.

#### EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HOUSES

The later in time we go the more likely are we to find houses with original furnishings. Therefore the problem of creating the background for eighteenth-century houses is not so great as it is for sixteenth and seventeenth-century houses. Osterley Park, Middlesex, which belonged to the Child family, is an example of a house reconstructed and redecorated in the late eighteenth century by Adam. It retains most of its original furniture but contains only two contemporary portraits. We shall have therefore to look elsewhere to see what people wore, but that should not be difficult as there are a great many eighteenth-century portrait painters and also many paintings showing people on social occasions.

Osterley Park, like so many country houses, was adapted from previous buildings on the same site. The Tudor house was

<sup>1</sup> Knole, Sevenoaks, Kent, contains some very fine seventeenth-century furniture, some of it with original hangings.

built round a quadrangle, and though Adam kept this plan we can see his work in making the house conform to the standards of his time. In order to have the main rooms on the first floor, in accordance with Italian principles, he raised the floor of the courtyard and on the entrance side replaced the rooms with a great screen of a double row of Ionic columns surmounted by a pediment. The outside walls are of brick, and Adam has kept the four corner towers but the windows have been re-arranged and sash windows have replaced earlier mullioned ones.

We enter Osterley up a flight of steps, through the screens of pillars, across the courtyard and find ourselves in the entrance hall where the guests were received. From here we can wander through magnificent series of rooms with stucco decoration of classical and Renaissance motifs, sometimes enclosing paintings and sometimes itself coloured. Adam designed not only houses but also furniture, carpets and silver to go in them. All the interior decoration was part of one scheme, so that the characteristic ornaments of bows, drapes, rosettes and flutes appear in woodwork and silver as well as in stucco. In some rooms the pattern of the carpet echoes the ceiling; in the library the pattern of the frieze is taken up in the cresting on the bookcases and in the fireplace. Each room has moulded mahogany doors with brass mounts and steel firegrates and fenders also designed by Adam.

In the eighteenth century the order of the day was rather different from what it is now. People got up early and in London they paid calls, while in the country they went for walks before breakfast. Breakfast was rather a formal meal to which guests might be invited and it took place about ten o'clock in a special room called the Breakfast Room—there is a Breakfast Room at Osterley decorated in the Rococo style. Dinner was at two or three, or even later in the afternoon, and supper was at ten or eleven o'clock at night. Horace Walpole (1717-1797) remarks in one of his letters<sup>1</sup> that in London supper was becoming absurdly late and that Lord Derby's cook threatened to leave because he had to dress suppers at three in the morning after the party had returned, perhaps from the Pleasure Gardens at Vauxhall or Ranelagh.

<sup>1</sup> *Selected Letters of Horace Walpole*. Everyman.

The dining-room at Osterley has a large mahogany table and a set of lyre-backed chairs upholstered in leather. The table is laid with appropriate silver : candlesticks, plates, covered dishes and a sugar basket, a mustard pot, a pepper pot and a salt cellar, each lined with blue glass. In the middle of the table is a branched centrepiece holding little dishes for sweetmeats or pickles with which the guests could serve themselves. On three side tables there are mahogany knife cases and on two tables there are tea urns. We can imagine gentlemen in embroidered waistcoats and knee-breeches, and ladies in high powdered wigs and dresses with panniers, sitting down to dine here.

After dinner the ladies retired and a servant brought wine and glasses for the gentlemen to drink toasts. The head of the house called upon each guest in turn to propose a toast which all had to drink and then they turned to smoking. When they had finished they rejoined the ladies in the drawing-room for tea which at this time corresponded to our after-dinner coffee. (See plate 4.)

The drawing-room at Osterley has green silk walls and an elaborate green, gold and pink stucco ceiling. This was the room that Horace Walpole on his first visit enthusiastically described as 'worthy of Eve before the Fall.' There are two veneered and inlaid commodes, three gilt framed mirrors and a set of gilt chairs in the rococo style upholstered in silk and embroidery.

There are several contemporary paintings illustrating the tea drinking. At the National Gallery *The Strode Family* by Hogarth shows a lady and two gentlemen seated on high-backed chairs near a round table which has a white cloth on it. Another gentleman is pouring water from a kettle into a teapot : the kettle, the teapot, the tray and the milk jug are all of silver ; there are two or three small porcelain tea bowls with no handles and a mahogany tea-caddy. Tea-making was part of the social ritual and was carried out in company, not in the kitchen. This picture was painted in the early eighteenth century and by the time Adam had built Osterley there was much more porcelain and the whole tea set would have been made of that material. At first when tea was very expensive the teapot and the tea-cups were small and the tea, China until the early nineteenth century, was taken

very weak and usually without milk. By the late eighteenth century tea was drunk not only after dinner but also at breakfast and at places of public entertainment such as Vauxhall or the baths at Bath. In museums with fine arts sections we can usually find eighteenth-century porcelain which will give us an idea of the tea sets of those days : blue, green and red often form a background for Chinese and flower patterns. We can also often find examples of silver tea sets.

Fashionable people did not always go out in the evening ; sometimes they entertained guests at home. At these parties cards and dancing were the favourite amusements. Mrs. Lybbe Powys in her diary describes one of these parties. ' They danced in the saloon. No minuets that night ; would have been difficult without a master of ceremonies among so many people of rank. Two card rooms, the drawing room and the eating-room. The latter looked so elegant lighted up ; two tables at loo, one quinze, one vingt-une, many whist. At one of the former large sums passed and repassed. I saw one (nameless here) lady of quality borrow ten pieces of Tessier within half an hour after she sat down to vingt-une and a countess at loo who owed to every soul round the table before half the night was over.'

Besides the dining-room and the drawing-room there are usually a number of other living rooms in an eighteenth-century house. At Osterley there is the library with flat-topped desk, silver inkwells and walls lined with books ; the breakfast-room, the Etruscan room and the tapestry room. The Etruscan room was inspired by what Adam thought was Etruscan pottery though in fact it was Greek. There was a fashion at that time for imitating pottery patterns but Horace Walpole finds it degrading to have these patterns on walls, ceilings and chairs. ' I never saw such a tumble into bathos. It is like going out of a palace into a potter's field.' However he admired the small drawing-room, the walls of which are lined with contemporary tapestries which illustrate the loves of the gods and contain a rich profusion of flowers, birds and animals.

Walpole said that Mrs. Child's dressing-room was full of pictures, gold filigree, china and lacquer like all the rest of the house but he did not admire the state bed. He found the domed bedstead too theatrical. We can still see it and the gilt chairs

almost as they were when he saw them. The bed has gold velvet curtains and a valance with the family crest, and the chairs have oval backs resting on sphinxes. There is a lacquer commode and a large looking-glass.

By the second half of the eighteenth century bedrooms contained more furniture than we have seen in the bedrooms of earlier periods. For instance wash-stands and dressing tables can be found in museums. One type of wash-stand consisted of a wooden ring to hold the basin, resting on a tripod stand in the base of which was a circular depression for the bottle. In the middle was a cone-shaped box to hold the soap and sometimes a drawer or two. In the Blue bedroom at Strawberry Hill Horace Walpole had on a lacquer commode 'an ewer and bason of blue and white Sève [sic] china, under it a blue and gold china bottle.' The dressing table was often elaborately veneered and inlaid and was surmounted by a mirror.

In Hogarth's series of pictures *Marriage à la Mode*<sup>1</sup> there is a scene depicting the dressing-room of a countess. The countess is shown sitting before her dressing table on which there are a number of boxes and trinkets and a looking-glass. She is having her hair curled by a servant and is talking to her lover who is offering her a ticket to a masked ball. At the same time she is entertaining a few friends to a concert; a flute player and a singer are shown and a black servant offering cups of tea or chocolate to the guests. The whole scene is a satire on the extravagance of high life and cannot be taken too seriously, but it illustrates the prevailing custom of entertaining in the dressing-room.

Before we leave Osterley or any contemporary house we should look at the grounds to see if there are still any of the landscape gardens which were such a feature of the period. In the gallery at Osterley there are two pictures showing the ornamental water with swans, the parkland with deer and cattle and the peasants haymaking, all of which was part of the scene when the house was built and for some time after. The water is still there and so are the swans, but the park is now overgrown with many closely planted trees so that the effect is less spacious than it must once have been. The kitchen garden, costing £1,400 a year to keep up and the menagerie of birds that Walpole noticed have gone,

<sup>1</sup> In the National Gallery.

but there remain some garden buildings. The eighteenth-century discovery of the beauties of wild nature led people to do away with the formal garden, and the rediscovery of classical architecture led them to construct temples in the vistas of their parks. There remain at Osterley a mid-eighteenth-century temple with a heavy pillared porch and pediment, parts of a Doric orangery and a restored semi-circular garden house with Venetian windows.

On our visits to a castle and three houses we have seen how in different periods we should look out for different features and that it is important to know something of the background of a house before we visit it so that we may be ready to learn what it can tell us of the life of the people of its day. We have also seen a little of the variety and richness of the sources which may be tapped to provide this background. The buildings themselves are often lifeless until we have found the people who lived there and read of the lives they led and seen some of their tableware and bedroom furniture which has been preserved in museums.

The lists below are to show the kind of thing to look for when visiting country houses and castles and when trying to find out the background before and after a visit. The architecture and interior decoration apply to existing buildings; the decorative motifs are architectural in origin but they will usually be found repeated on interior decoration, furniture and silverware. The furniture and tableware are taken from museums and not from inventories where they appear a good deal earlier than the dates for which they are listed here. The bibliography gives contemporary sources which describe the kind of life lived in these castles and houses.

## MEDIEVAL TO EARLY TUDOR 1100-1500

### EXAMPLES

*Norman keeps, 12th century*: Castle Hedingham, Essex; Rochester Castle, Kent.

*Later castles, 13th century*: Caernarvon Castle, Wales; 14th century, Bodiam Castle, Sussex.

*Fortified manor houses, 13th century*: Little Wenham Hall, Suffolk; 14th century Stokesay Castle, Shropshire.

*Tudor manor houses*: 1528 Compton Wynyates, Warwickshire 1523 Sutton Place, Surrey.

## DECORATIVE MOTIFS

11th and 12th centuries: Rounded arches; zig-zag moulding; plain or voluted capitals.

13th century: Pointed arches; plate tracery; three-leaved capitals.

14th century: Ogival arches; geometric and curvilinear tracery in windows; ball-flower, crocket, quatrefoil ornament.

15th and 16th centuries: Square-headed openings; linen-fold panelling; perpendicular mullions.

16th century: Beginning of Renaissance motifs (see Elizabethan and Jacobean).

## ARCHITECTURE

*Defensive features of castle*

Early keep on artificial hill with entrance up steps, wall and ditch enclosing bailey.

Later castles on natural hill or with moat, curtain walls and towers, wall passages with slit windows; barbican or gatehouse with portcullis, drawbridge, machicolations and arrow-slits, murder holes.

Windows: narrow on outside, wide inside; walls very thick; slit windows facing outwards, larger windows facing inwards.

*Fortified Manor House*

Usually buildings arranged round one or two courtyards.

Outside walls thicker than inside walls; windows on outside walls still small. Windows have transoms to take shutters; sometimes glazed with horn.

Gatehouse still partly fortified.

Doorways have holes for hooks for wooden doors (no door frames).

*Tudor mansion*

Often made of brick; smaller bricks the earliest.

Large mullioned windows; bay windows for great chamber and hall.

Gatehouse often has large windows; defensive features purely decorative.

## INTERIOR

*Main rooms*

Castle: Hall with sleeping quarters in thickness of wall; chapel; cellars; kitchens.

Manor house: Hall with screens leading to kitchen which might be detached block; at other end of hall stairs leading to solar over

cellar; Chapel; By end of 15th century and 16th century bedrooms and separate sleeping accommodation for servants.

*Stairs*: Spiral stairs until 16th century when short flights and platforms built round well.

*Fireplaces*: Either in the middle of the hall with a hole in roof for the smoke, or round, pointed or square-headed recesses in wall with short shaft to outside.

By 15th and 16th century perpendicular panelled and cusped fireplaces and tall highly ornamental chimneys.

*Walls*: Earliest walls bare or hung with Flemish tapestries.

By 15th and 16th centuries in hall and solar wooden panelling either plain, linen-fold or parchemin panels or walls plastered and painted.

*Roofs*: Open rafter roofs until 15th and 16th centuries when flat wooden ceilings came in; these were divided by supporting beams which were often painted or decorated.

## FURNITURE

Little survives from earlier than 15th century and 16th century, but trestle tables, benches and chests can be seen in illuminated MSS.

*Examples*: Early 16th century box chair and settle with linen-fold carving; carved chest; 4 poster bed with bulbous pillars; embroidered table carpet; tables and forms; desk and book-cupboard; livery cupboard with pierced panels; all furniture made of oak.

## IVORY

Mirror backs and caskets; chessmen.

## TABLEWARE

Spoons of silver and pewter with bowls in the shape of plovers' eggs remain from 15th century onwards.

From 14th century onwards silver mazer, standing cup, dish and silver-mounted drinking horn; silver basins and ewers and standing bowls rare.

14th century onwards, bronze nutcrackers, bowl, tripod ewer, rushlight holder, pricket candlestick, jug, and equestrian aquamane for pouring water over hands of guests.

Wooden bowls and dishes.

Pottery jug, pitcher; porringer for bouillon or clear soup; dish; mug or tyg; posset pot for drinking posset or syllabub which was milk curdled by the addition of wine or ale and spice.



## DRESS

Actual clothes do not survive from the Middle Ages except for jewelry such as rings, cameos, small pendants and reliquaries. Some late medieval armour exists.

Illustrations can be found in illuminated manuscripts, brass and marble effigies in churches, and in Bayeux tapestry (12th century).

*Women*

Long tunic with kirtle beneath and cloak on top ; sleeves develop hangings ; head-dress developed from wimple and veil to braided hair and in 15th century tall henin and butterfly head-dresses.

*Men*

Armour developed from chain mail, through stages of partial plate armour to complete plate armour.

Civil costume developed from long tunic to shorter tunic, first mid-calf then knee length.

Long stockings developed as tunics got shorter. Hair was long early, and short by 15th century.

## ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN 1550-1625

## EXAMPLES

Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, 1590 ; Burton Agnes, Yorkshire, 1600-1610 ; Kirby Hall, Northamptonshire, 1607-12 ; Aston Hall, Birmingham, 1618-35 ; Audley End, Essex, 1603-16.

## DECORATIVE MOTIFS

Classical motifs applied all over the surface of walls, ceilings, furniture so as to leave no blank spaces.

Pillars of the three orders : Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, surmounted by entablature ; on woodwork bulbous pillars.

Semi-circular arches, pilasters, caryatids, arabesques, masks, medallions.

Strapwork and natural motifs such as vine leaves, acorns, animals, flowers.

## ARCHITECTURE

*Windows* : Large mullioned windows, often a bay in hall or great chamber.

*Porch* : With three orders one above the other ; semi-circular arches with knot ; sometimes a room over the porch.

*Skyline was uneven* : Gables, often 'Dutch gables' ; turrets, chimneys, sometimes a parapet as well.

*Building material*: Depends on area; brick, half timber, stone.

*Lay-out*: House sometimes E shaped. Formal garden; walled garden on south side with symmetrical flower beds; knot garden and sunk garden; maze; terraces; avenue; steps. Gatehouse not defensive.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

*Principal rooms*: Great Hall with screens and Great Chamber still dominant features.

Long Gallery, Chapel, kitchens; bedrooms becoming fashionable; priest hides in Roman Catholic houses.

*Walls*: Still hung with tapestries or panelled with oak sometimes inlaid; painted plaster friezes.

*Ceilings*: Plaster; overall geometric or flowing pattern containing flowers, animals, heraldry; sometimes pendants.

*Fireplaces*: Stone, wood, coloured marble; classical orders or caryatids making a whole of fireplaces and overmantel; wrought iron firebacks.

*Doorways*: of wood, as fireplace, making a complete whole with panelling.

*Staircase*: Stairs in short flights to platforms, wind round well; dog gates; tall newel posts; thick balusters pierced to form patterns.

*Floors*: Wooden, in rich houses carpets.

## FURNITURE

Mainly oak, sometimes inlaid with boxwood, holly, cherry. Walnut just coming into fashion.

*Upholstery and hangings*: Embroidery and tapestry for cushion covers, chair covers and bed curtains.

*Examples*: Four-poster bed; chairs with stretchers, sometimes upholstered or inlaid; stool, settle, form, long table; court cupboard with bulbous pillars; table desk; chest; draw table (to extend).

*Musical instruments*: Chest of recorders; cupboard of viols; virginals; lute.

## TABLEWARE

*Silver and silver gilt with Renaissance decoration*: bowl; mazer (silver-mounted wooden bowl for drinking mead); ewer; silver-mounted jugs of stone-ware; wine cups with or without covers (sometimes silver-mounted coconut, agate, ostrich egg or nautilus shell); plates and dishes; tankards; large standing salt

for salt and spices; spoons (fig shaped until c. 1640); small silver-mounted glass or crystal castor for pepper or spices. Imported Venetian wine glasses.

*Pottery*: Dish, posset pot, tyg, mug, cup, ointment pot.

Trenchers for eating sweetmeats or dessert: wooden painted or gilt.

## DRESS

Some actual clothes and jewelry and a good deal of armour survives.

Other sources include effigies on tombs, miniatures and early portraits.

Costume very much decorated: slashing to reveal garment below, tagging, embroidery, jewelry especially on bodices and doublets; pearls often sewn on to clothes.

*Men*: Peascod-shaped doublet, stuffed breeches, hose and buckled shoes, short cloak, stiff high-crowned hat or soft hat with feather; short hair, pointed beard.

*Women*: Stiffened bodice and small waist with large sleeves, skirt with farthingale, embroidered gloves, silk stockings started in Elizabeth's reign.

Both sexes wore pleated ruffs which by the end of the period became standing lace collars.

## STUART 1625-1700

### EXAMPLES

Queen's House, Greenwich, 1635; Coleshill, Bucks, 1662; Packwood House, Warwickshire, c. 1660; Chatsworth, Derbyshire, 1687; South and east front of Hampton Court, 1690; Ham House, Surrey, 1673.

### ARCHITECTS AND CRAFTSMEN

Inigo Jones 1573-1652; Sir Christopher Wren 1632-1723; Grinling Gibbons 1648-1721; Italian painters and stuccoists.

### DECORATIVE MOTIFS

Classical orders, pediment or entablature, semi-circular arches over doorways and fire places.

Exuberant high relief carving in wood, stone or plaster of naturalistic swags and pendants of fruit, flowers, foliage, trophies, scrolls, putti.

### ARCHITECTURE

Order, proportion and symmetry. Brick buildings with stone quoins, porches, pediments and perhaps carved swags. At first

some pedimented gables, then gables disappeared altogether and roofs were hipped; straight skyline accentuated by parapet and cornice; sometimes a cupola.

*Windows*: Mullioned windows gave way to sash windows; dormer windows in hipped roofs; main windows with pediment or entablature.

*Porch*: Grand portico with steps leading up to pillared entrance; smaller porches with pillars or pilasters surmounted by pediment, cornice, entablature or shell-shaped hood.

*Gate*: Wrought iron.

*Formal garden* with terrace, canal, avenues and elaborate topiary.

## ARRANGEMENT OF ROOMS

H plan; hall now a vestibule with staircase leading out of it.

On ground floor Great Parlour beyond Hall and sometimes bedrooms either side; other bedrooms and sometimes a gallery on first floor.

Servants now in basement.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

*Walls*: Oak and cedar panelling often in large frames to take tapestry; also gilt leather or damask.

*Overmantel and fireplace*: Framed in classical columns and often incorporating picture in overmantel; fire-pan occasionally replaces open fire.

*Ceilings*: Painted or plastered; plaster ceilings divided into circular, oval or rectangular panels by heavy ribs on which decoration is concentrated.

*Doorways*: Framed in classical pillars often surmounted with broken pediment containing cartouche.

*Stairs*: Come down into central hall; balustrade of carved and pierced rails with carvings of scrolls and trophies.

*Floors*: Marble, parquet, carpets (Persian or Turkish).

## FURNITURE

Oak and walnut; walnut veneer; walnut with marquetry of ivory, satin wood, mother-of-pearl or ash; japanning; marquetry; carved, gilt and painted wood.

*Upholstery and hangings*: Embroidered hangings, velvet, damask, brocade, tapestry.

*Examples*: Four-poster bed with hangings; walnut chest of drawers; chairs with cane or upholstered back and seat; elaborately carved or japanned mirror and picture frame; day bed; sofa; arm chair; lacquer or walnut secretary desk; china

cabinet; book case; cupboard; long case clock; gate-leg table; spinet; iron fire-dogs.

## SILVER

Hearth equipment (rare); toilet service (mirror frame, salver, boxes, vase, pincushion); candle snuffers and tray; candlesticks; clock; snuff boxes; inkstands; sconces of wall brackets.

## SILVER TABLEWARE

Spoons with oval bowls; early forks with two prongs; spoons and forks with trifid ends; wine cups with or without covers until Charles I; plates and dishes; beaker and tankard for beer; wine funnel for decanting wine; wine taster; flask; standing salt giving way to small salt; fruit bowl; sweetmeat dish; salver; porringer; vase; posset pot or two handled cup and cover; teapot; tea cups; coffee pot; chocolate pot; sugar box; nutmeg grater.

## PEWTER

*Tableware*: Existed in the Middle Ages but survivals earlier than the 17th century are rare; e.g. spoons, tankard, candlestick, cup, salt, porringer, inkstand, snuff box.

## POTTERY

Dish, jug, piggin (small mug shaped like a bucket with a straight handle), mug, teapot, tea caddy, wine bottle, tankard.

## GLASS

Wine glass (taking the place of silver wine cup), goblet, sweetmeat dish, covered bowl, serving jug, jelly glass, tazza (dish on foot), tumbler or flute, cup, bottle, candlestick.

## DRESS

Portraits, e.g. Van Dyck, Lely.

Miniatures e.g. Cooper.

Many examples of actual clothes and armour.

### *Women*

*Charles I*: Full skirt tied back to show embroidered petticoat; bodice cut low and finished with muslin collar and elbow cuffs; lace gloves; hair in a knot with side pieces in ringlets; droplet ear rings; mask in public.

*Puritan*: Dark clothes; plain linen collar and cuffs; large white apron.

*Restoration*: Ringlets and curls on the forehead; tight bodice and full sleeve both open in front and caught up with jewelled clasp; wide skirt of silk or satin; wide cloak with hood.

#### *Men*

*Charles I*: Large hat with a feather; long hair; lace collar and cuffs; doublet braided and tagged at the waist; sleeves cut to show shirt; breeches full but not padded; stockings and wide-topped boots.

*Puritan*: Tall hat with no feather; plain dark doublet; plain linen collar and cuffs.

*Restoration*: Long curled wig; knee length coat and long waistcoat; stockings and shoes; long lace cravat; lace frills at knee; sword; jacket sleeves short to show shirt.

### EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY 1700-1750

#### EXAMPLES

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, 1706-24; Holkham Hall, Norfolk, 1736-61; Castle Howard, Yorkshire, 1702-14; Seaton Delaval, Northumberland, 1718; Knowsley, Lancashire, 1733.

#### ARCHITECTS AND CRAFTSMEN

William Kent, 1684-1748; Sir John Vanburgh, 1664-1726; James Gibbs, 1682-1754.

#### DECORATIVE MOTIFS

*Baroque*: Heavy and deep cut carving; architectural motifs such as pediments, pillars, pilasters, terminal figures; other motifs such as masks, trophies, key pattern, scroll, acanthus leaf, shell, fish scale, swags, garlands and pendants of fruit.

#### ARCHITECTURE

Symmetrical and classical. In large houses often a central block with colonnades curving like horns to connect with offices. Large spaces of plain wall, long walls divided by pilasters, often rustication on lower part of building.

Pillared portico surmounted by pediment.

Windows with pediment; Venetian windows.

Roofs hipped, sometimes hidden by parapet.

Smaller brick houses with stone quoins.

Wrought iron gates between pillars surmounted by urns.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

*Main rooms in large houses* : Staircase hall leading to salon, often flanked by suites of rooms consisting of anteroom, drawing room, bedroom.

*Walls* : Pinewood panelling with carved overmantel, doorways and alcoves (for china); panelling painted olive green, buff or white with gilt carving; paintings incorporated in panelling and on ceiling; sometimes damask, velvet or tapestry on walls; paper just coming into fashion.

*Staircase* : Lighter in structure than hitherto; handrail with spiral balusters.

*Fire grate* has largely replaced open fire place.

## FURNITURE

*Variety of decoration* : Walnut; mahogany from 1730; lacquered and japanned wood; a great deal of heavy gilt furniture; marquetry of brass and tortoiseshell.

*Upholstery* : Leather, cut velvet and damask; silk embroidery for curtains and covers.

*Examples* : Mahogany four-poster bed with pillars and cornice; mahogany or walnut dressing table and mirror, bedside table and bedside cupboard, commode; gilt chandelier and mirror; mahogany day bed, bureau cabinet, bookcase and flat topped desk; gilt settee; marble topped console table; mahogany card table and tea-kettle stand.

## SILVER

Dressing set, case of razors.

*Tableware* : Wine cistern; punch bowl; punch ladle; tankard; waiter; beaker; ewer; flask; (pewter drinking vessels as in the 17th century.)

Small salts, cruet stand, bread basket, sauce boat, tureen, knives, spoons and forks, two-handled cup, spice box, nutmeg grater, porringer, dish cross with lamp.

*Tea 'equipage'* : Small teapot, tea strainer, tea caddy, cream jug, tea kettle on stand with spirit lamp, sugar caster, muffineer (small caster for sugaring muffins), cake basket and toasting fork. Candlesticks, sconces, candle snuffers and tray, taper sticks.

## POTTERY As 17th century.

## GLASS

Decanter, cordial glass, sweetmeat glass, ale glass engraved with hops, wine glass engraved with vine or grapes, goblet, bowl, candlestick.

## DRESS

Miniatures, portraits, conversation pieces, actual clothes.

*Men* : Waisted coat with short sleeves to show cuff ; long skirt of coat stiffened with whalebone ; long waistcoat or vest reaching to top of stockings which were rolled over breeches ; vest often embroidered ; sword ; cane ; cravat ; wig tied at nape, hair shaven beneath and night cap worn at home ; three-cornered hat laced but without feathers.

*Women* : Chinz and calico patterns ; wide skirt, sack back (drapery falling from nape of neck to hem), hooded cloaks, lace cap.

LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY : 1750-1800

## EXAMPLES

Keddleston Hall, Derbyshire, 1760 ; Syon House, Middlesex, 1762 ; Attingham Park, Shropshire, 1784 ; Heaton Park, Lancashire, 1772.

## ARCHITECTS AND CRAFTSMEN

Robert Adam, 1728-92 ; James Wyatt, 1746-1813 ; Henry Holland, 1746-1806 ; Thomas Chippendale *fl.*, 1732-62 ; Thomas Sheraton, 1751-1806.

## DECORATIVE MOTIFS

*Rococo* : either French rococo with ornament of broken shell, scroll, foliage and fruit or scroll enclosing cartouche ; or Gothic ornament of pointed or ogival arches ; or Chinese ornament of exotic birds, pagodas, icicles, dragons, trellis or lattice.

Sometimes all these are mixed in the same bit of furniture or wall decoration.

*Neo-Classic* : Light Graeco-Roman and Renaissance decoration such as fluting, medallions, grotesques, drapes, acanthus leaf, bows, ram's head, urn, palmette, ears of wheat.

## ARCHITECTURE

As early 18th century.

Landscape gardening, follies and false ruins.

Mid 18th century saw the beginnings of the Gothic revival.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

Main rooms as early 18th century.

Walls, doorways, fireplaces, ceilings designed as a whole with



decoration in low stucco relief; rococo or geometric patterns sometimes enclosing pictures; often pastel coloured background with carvings picked out in white; later work of Adam polychromatic; Chinese wall paper coming into fashion.

Marble fireplaces with inlay of coloured composition; steel fire grate and fire irons.

Doorways usually with entablature instead of pediment.

Occasionally state-rooms with barrel vault and with segmental ends; sometimes niches for statues.

## FURNITURE

Mahogany; veneers of walnut, kingwood, satinwood, harewood (stained sycamore); painted or japanned beechwood; satinwood with bands of painted flowers; ormolu (brass mounts); coloured composition inlay of flower patterns etc. in marble-topped tables and fireplaces.

Upholstery and hangings as early 18th century.

*Examples:* Mahogany or Chinese lacquer four-poster bed with embroidered hangings and coverlet; mahogany wardrobe, wash-stand and dressing-table; satinwood dressing-table and chairs; japanned or mahogany commode; mahogany or satinwood bureau, sideboard, secretaire, writing table, china cabinet and bookcase; ormolu perfume burner; mahogany tables of all shapes; marble-topped semi-circular side tables; mahogany, gilt or lacquered mirrors; mahogany chairs with a great variety of backs such as lyre, shield, ribbon, oval, Gothic arch.

## TABLEWARE

*Silver:* mid 18th century rococo, late 18th century Adam, from 1770 silver plate. Tea equipage as early 18th century with addition of sugar basin, tongs and hot water jug; tea urn taking the place of kettle on stand.

Dinner service as early 18th century; salt, pepper and mustard pot with pierced design and blue glass liners.

*Porcelain:* Often with rococo patterns and rural scenes.

Plates, dishes, salad bowl, sauce boat, punch bowl, tureen, chocolate cup, custard cup and cover, chestnut basket, cruet, butter dish, dessert basket, sweetmeat dish, posset pot.

*Tea equipage:* Teapot and stand, breakfast cups, tea cups with or without handles, trembleuse to hold cup, saucers, sugar dish, slop basin, cream jug, milk jug, tea jar (caddy), cake or bread and butter plate.

Silver candlesticks, etc., as earlier.

## GLASS

As early 18th century with addition of finger bowls.

## ENAMELS

Etui (small container for bodkins, needles, toothpicks), bonbonnière (for sweets), patch box, scent bottle, snuff box, inkstand, salt cellar.

## DRESS

Portraits and conversation pieces.

Material used included brocades, satins, silks and much embroidery.

*Women*: Skirts with hoops, and later panniers, tied back to reveal embroidered petticoat; corsetted bodices and small waists: in last quarter 18th century very large high powdered wigs with fruit and flowers on top; face patches, cosmetics, painted fans.

*Men*: Skirted coat gave way to coat with close fitting tails; embroidered waistcoats; powdered wigs; high lace cravat; later 18th century plainer cloth and pantaloons to mid calf.

Powder tax stopped powdered wigs in 1795.

## NINETEENTH CENTURY

## EXAMPLES

Aynho Park, Northamptonshire, 1795; Dinton House, Wiltshire, 1808-18; Knebworth, Hertfordshire (Tudor) 1843; Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton (Gothic), 1887.

## ARCHITECTS AND CRAFTSMEN

*Regency*. Sir John Soane, 1753-1837. John Nash, 1752-1835.

*Gothic Revival*. A. W. N. Pugin, 1812-52; Gilbert Scott, 1811-78.

*Queen Anne Revival*. Norman Shaw, 1831-1912.

*Interior decoration*. William Morris, 1834-96.

## ARCHITECTURE

Early 19th century: usually stucco; either classical with pillared portico and bay or Venetian windows or Gothic with gables and pointed windows.

By mid 19th century Gothic revival in full swing in large houses: 13th century, then 14th century, then Tudor brick. At the same time classical houses continued to be built.

1880s Queen Anne revival.

## DECORATIVE MOTIFS

Mostly imitative of Gothic, Renaissance or classical.

Naturalistic floral patterns for papers and textiles ; at end of century superseded by stylized floral patterns.

Tendency to overdecorate except among a few craftsmen.

## INTERIOR DECORATION

*Main rooms* : Entrance hall, reception rooms, ball room, breakfast room, smoking room, library, music room, bathroom only in rich houses, bedrooms ; kitchen still a long way from the dining room ; attics for servants, one for men and the other for women ; conservatory attached to the house.

Large houses sometimes had a medieval hall with open fireplace, etc., or medieval library with carved panelling and mullioned windows.

Gothic decoration supposed to look like stone but in fact often made of cast iron, composition or even papier mâché.

Wall paper largely replaced stucco and panelling ; Morris made tapestries intended to be hung on the wall as in the Middle Ages. Stoves and small fire grates for heating.

Oil lamps replacing candles, either as chandeliers, wall lamps or table lamps.

Axminster, Wilton or Turkey carpets.

Furniture tended to be grouped in the middle of the room. Rooms overcrowded with ornaments made of shell-work, beads, glass, etc., and with daguerrotype photographs.

## FURNITURE

1800-20. *Regency* : Imitation of the antique, archaic lions, winged sphinxes, emblems of Jupiter ; much ormolu and metal inlay.

*Victorian* : Upholstered chairs, sofas, ottomans covered in flowered chinz or cretonne ; furniture might be heavy oak, papier mâché, marquetry of walnut, rosewood, sycamore, ebony, etc. or brass mounted ; carving might be Gothic, Renaissance or Classical ; furniture might be painted with scenes from classical or medieval stories.

Furniture included tables, chairs, sofas, bureau, writing table, cabinet, sideboard, washstand, mirror, piano. Four-poster beds giving way to half tester and to iron bedsteads.

## TABLEWARE

*China* : Early Victorian fashion was for painted china, late Victorian for modelled decoration and thick coloured glazes.

*China* included tea and coffee and dinner services.

*Glass*: Mid 19th century coloured glass and heavy plain glass, after 1851 more engraved glass. Glass includes decanters, wine glasses, jugs, ewers, flask, vase, bowl.

*Silver*: Tended to be heavily embossed and chased and included cruets, vases and cutlery.

## DRESS

From fashion plates as well as portraits.

*Women*: At first very simple high-waisted dresses with poke bonnets; 1820 waist normal and tighter, skirts wider and more frilled, hat for a short period, balloon sleeves; 1850 crinoline instead of petticoats; 1870s bustle and little hats instead of bonnets; 1880s sporting masculine clothes; 1890s shaped skirt cut on the cross.

*Men*: Plain cloth coat, top hat, neckcloth; pantaloons and riding boots; trousers beginning; by end of century more informal bowler hat and boater replacing top hat.

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## CHAPTER IV

### CHURCH BUILDINGS AND FURNISHINGS

Most of our abbeys, cathedrals and parish churches were founded in the Middle Ages when England was a Roman Catholic country. At the Reformation in the sixteenth century when England broke away from Rome these buildings were very much changed. The monasteries were liquidated, the abbeys were sold to landowners who often built themselves houses from the abbey stones, and the gold and silver plate was taken by the king. The shrines of saints, which in abbeys and cathedrals had attracted large numbers of pilgrims, were destroyed. Many painted and sculptured altar pieces were taken down, chantry chapels were abolished, stained glass was taken out and mural paintings were whitewashed over.

To find out how these churches were used in the Middle Ages we have to look very carefully in them for medieval features probably no longer used. We have to search in museums for such church plate as was not melted down, and we have to watch Catholic ceremonies in our own and other countries. We can also find some help in contemporary source material: there are scattered illustrations in illuminated manuscripts of priests and monks going about their work, and there is valuable first-hand information in such well-known accounts as Chaucer's description of the pilgrims in the *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* and the *Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond*, a monk of Bury St. Edmunds. Inventories of church valuables which were made at the Reformation tell us a great deal about church possessions. Occasionally we may be lucky enough to find in a local parish chest an early account book giving the expenses of the removal of medieval features from a church.

Later churches are also interesting; both those which were built after the Reformation and those medieval churches which have post-Reformation features. Tombs are always worth looking at for contemporary costume. The documents in the parish chest,

which may have been transferred to the local Record Office, should always be investigated. Those that deal with the running of the church are the Vestry Minutes, the Churchwardens' Accounts (see Chapter 5. The Village) which are particularly valuable for the upkeep and alterations to the building, the Charities and the Church Terrier which describes the property owned and the tithes due. The services in most churches after the Reformation were very much the same as Anglican services are now but we should remember that at some periods the fittings of the church may have been somewhat different from what they are now. For instance in the eighteenth century many churches had galleries, 'three-decker' pulpits and enormous box pews most of which have since disappeared, though they may have left traces which can still be found. At Lockington, Leicestershire, is a medieval church which has an eighteenth-century three-decker pulpit, box pews and a gallery. King's Norton in the same county has an eighteenth-century Gothic church with contemporary iron gate and inside a similar gallery, pews and pulpit.

Finally we must not think that only medieval churches are beautiful; many seventeenth-century churches, such as those designed by Wren and his followers in the City of London, have splendid classical proportions, magnificently carved wooden fruit and foliage decoration on pulpits, doors and panels, and often very fine silver-gilt altar vessels.

However in this chapter we shall concentrate mainly on the medieval or pre-Reformation church because so many of our churches were built in the Middle Ages and because their use is more difficult to understand than that of post-Reformation churches.

#### THE ABBEY

As Henry VIII abolished the monasteries at the Reformation most of them are now in ruins. Fountains, a Cistercian abbey in Yorkshire, is one of the best preserved in spite of the fact that Sir Stephen Proctor used stone quarried from the abbey to build himself the Jacobean house that we can see near the abbey ruins. The Cistercians were an offshoot of the Benedictines but followed a stricter rule and, because they laid great stress on the importance of manual labour, became famous for making waste places fertile.

In the twelfth century many of them settled in Yorkshire which had never recovered from William the Conqueror's harrying of the rebellious north. Here they introduced sheep farming and contributed to the growth of the English export of raw wool to Flanders.

Cistercian monks wore cowls and habits of unbleached wool. No tombs with portraits of monks have survived at Fountains, as they have for instance at St. Albans Benedictine Abbey, where there are three brasses of monks and one of a mitred abbot with a pastoral staff. At Fountains there is simply the matrix of a brass of an abbot in his cowl and habit with a crozier and mitre.

The monastic church is the largest of the abbey buildings of Fountains (Fig. 10). We can see from the pointed arches, cross-leaved decoration and stiff-leaved foliage on the capitals that most of it was built in the thirteenth century. Here the monks sang offices at intervals throughout the day and night. In the transept is the opening where the stairs came down from the dormitory so that the monks could get easily from their beds to the church at midnight for Matins followed by Lauds, after which they returned to bed. They sat in the choir which occupied the crossing and the most eastern bay of the nave. Their stalls are still marked by pits lined with sunk paving stones; and excavators found in these pits the remains of earthenware pots which had been put there for acoustic purposes. In the base of the first and second pillars of the nave can be seen notches for two transverse screens which probably enclosed a loft perhaps for a small organ. The fourth pair of arches have similar notches and also, higher up, pin holes for the rood screen and the two beams on which was hung the crucifix. On the other pillars of the nave can be found other notches showing where screens shut off the aisles from the nave and enclosed chapels. At the east end of the church is the Chapel of the Nine Altars. The bases of some of the altars remain; near the site of others lockers for holy vessels can still be seen. The exact position of the high altar is not now known.

In the early rule of the Cistercians it is laid down that the church furniture should be unostentatious: crosses should be of wood not of gold or silver, and candlesticks and censers should be of iron not of precious metal. The earliest monks at Fountains may have had such simple altar vessels and may have worn



simple vestments, but, by the end of the Middle Ages the monastery had grown rich from gifts and from sheep farming, and the inventory<sup>1</sup> of the abbey made at the Reformation gives a great many objects of precious metals and of fine cloths. If we take a few examples from the very long list, we shall get some idea of the wealth of a great monastery. There was a gilt and a jewelled

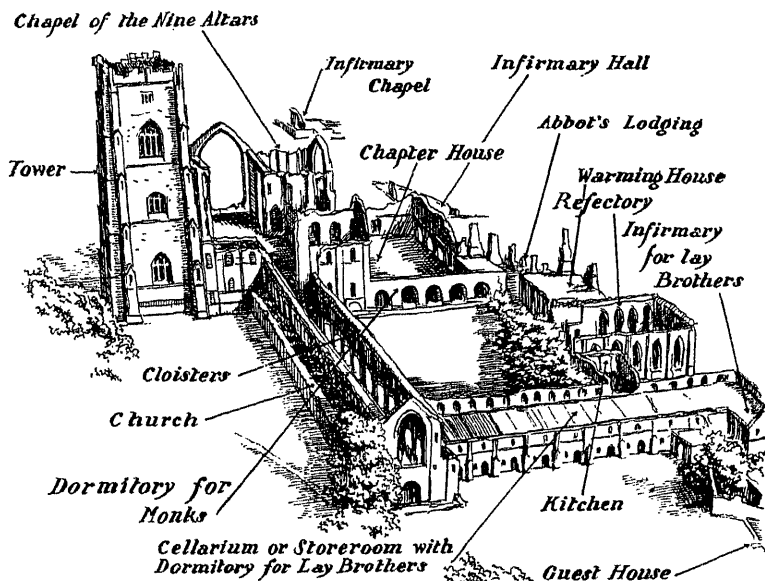


FIG. 10. The Ruins of Fountains Abbey. Drawn by Brian Cairns.

cross, a solid gold cross containing fragments of the true cross, and in silver gilt, candlesticks, cruets for wine and water, chalices and patens, ewer and basin, incense boat and censers. A rib of St. Laurence was housed in a silver gilt shrine, a piece of St. Anne's skull was set in silver, and there were several silver mounted sacred pictures. For the Abbot there was a large crozier for high days and a small one for ordinary days, two gilt and jewelled mitres, a ring and a great brooch to secure his robes. He had eighty copes of which six were made of cloth of gold; each cope according to colour and quality was suitable for a certain day. The other vestments included twenty complete

<sup>1</sup>For Inventory and Account Books mentioned below see J. R. Walbran, *Memorials of Fountains Abbey*: Surtees Society, Vols. 42, 57, 130. 1863-78.

sets of robes, of which one was made of embroidered gold silk, and there were numerous altar cloths, and four tapestry hangings for adorning the walls round the high altar. Altogether the inventory gives us an impression of the great magnificence and splendour that must have been seen at services in the church.<sup>1</sup> (See plate 5.)

On the south side of the church are the remains of the cloisters. Here the monks were able to spend short periods during the day reading or meditating, and we can still see the recesses where they kept their books. Opening off the cloister were most of the principal buildings of the abbey. On the east side is a large rectangular room, the Chapter House, where the monks met daily to hear a chapter of the Benedictine Rule and to remember the martyrs and the monks who had died on that day. Here, also, accusations were heard or brothers confessed their own faults against the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience or any other part of the Rule, and here sometimes the offenders were flogged as a punishment. Against the east wall are the remains of three benches on which the monks sat; in the middle of the second central bay is a stone with a socket for the desk from which the Rule was read, and on the floor are the gravestones of some of the abbots.

Next to the Chapter House is what is left of the Abbot's lodging house, which consisted of a hall, parlour, bedroom and closet, and below, three prison cells in which the positions of iron staples are still visible. Among these ruins excavators discovered various household utensils: part of a large brass cup, some earthenware, part of a razor blade. But if we turn again to the inventory taken at the Reformation we shall get a better idea of how the Abbot lived. He had among other things two silver basins and ewers for washing his hands at table, a gilt goblet, eight gilt standing dishes with covers, numerous flat gilt dishes for serving food on, and four gilt spoons. In a fifteenth-century account book from the abbey we can find out more about the Abbot's table; payments are made to get him oysters, partridges, quails, venison, fowls, nuts, figs and sweet wine. As head of the abbey he had to dispense hospitality to bishops and Royalty and no doubt that was one of the reasons why he had such a

<sup>1</sup> Historic and modern church plate is on display at Westminster Abbey.

high standard in food. Other items of his expenses include deer-skin for his boots, linen for his clothes, medicines such as liquorice for his throat, and ointments. By this time also, he and the other chief officers of the abbey had their own paid servants whose wages are recorded in the account books. We see therefore that the Abbot lived like a great lord.

Between the Abbot's lodging and the Refectory was the Warming-room in which are still visible two enormous fireplaces. Here during the winter the monks were allowed to warm themselves for a few minutes and here they were bled for medical purposes every quarter. The refectory is a large hall where the monks had their meals ; at its entrance are troughs where they washed before going in to eat. The midday meal, at least in the first strict years, was simply bread and vegetables cooked without fat. The Reformation inventory mentions sixteen gilt spoons, fourteen ungilt spoons and two gilt salts, among other things in the Buttery, and we may perhaps imagine that by the end of the Middle Ages the monks were not eating simply with their fingers. Excavators found under the kitchen a variety of rubbish indicating what the monks may have had for dinner in the later years : beef, mutton and venison bones ; poultry, heron and game bones ; oysters, mussel and cockle shells. When they were eating, one of the brothers would take a sacred book from a cupboard which we can still see, and read while the rest listened in silence.

The sick and old monks were lodged in the Infirmary which was a separate block with its own hall, chapel and kitchens. It was connected to the cloisters and to the Chapel of the Nine Altars by a covered passage. Other buildings of which remains are to be seen include the guest-house, the dormitory of the lay brothers, the cellar, the malt-house with part of a vat, the bake-house with part of an oven, the mill, the gate-house where the porter lived and parts of the wall which surrounded the whole abbey.

When we have looked at the buildings of an abbey we have by no means seen the whole of the life of the monks. Abbeys were not only religious institutions but also great feudal estates. The Reformation inventory gives a long list of stock such as cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, and of crops in the barns of the abbey

and of granges scattered all over the estate. The fifteenth-century account books mentioned earlier give details of sale of produce which includes six different kinds of wool, hides, horses, cheese, butter, cattle, hay, corn. Originally in Cistercian monasteries the monks, aided by lay brothers, did the manual work, but by the fifteenth century they seem to have employed paid labour. Expenses include wages for ploughing, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, caring for stock, sheep washing and shearing, and for repairs to sheds, walls, fisheries, boundary fences, drains and the mill.

Wool was the chief product of the Cistercian abbeys in Yorkshire and according to an Italian account of 1315 of amounts due from England, Fountains headed the list with an export of seventy-six sacks or packhorse loads. The shearing was done on the granges; the wool then had to come on pack horses to the river Ouse at Clifton, York, from whence it went by water to Hull. Here it was taken over by the Italian merchants who bought from the abbeys and exported mainly to Flanders. In the late thirteenth century, when the monks of Fountains had spent a lot of money on rebuilding the choir and adding the magnificent Chapel of the Nine Altars to their church, they got heavily into debt with some Jewish moneylenders in York. One of the reasons for this was the practice of making contracts with the merchants for a given quantity of wool in advance of its actual production. In 1276 in an agreement with an Italian firm of merchant exporters, the monks, in return for the advance payment of four years' wool crop, gave the abbey itself as security.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of debts and difficulties, the thirteenth century was the golden age for the export of raw wool, for by the fourteenth century England was beginning to weave her own cloth. The profits from the wool trade and the gifts of the pious were responsible for the wide gap between the original Cistercians' ideas of the vow of poverty, and the vast wealth in property and plate which was found by the men who made the Reformation inventory.

<sup>1</sup> See *Yorkshire Abbeys and the Wool Trade*. Thoresby Society (Leeds) 33rd Miscellany, 1935.

## THE CATHEDRAL

Canterbury Cathedral is one of the most splendid in the country and from it we can get an idea of what to look out for when visiting any cathedral.

It was originally a monastery of Benedictine monks. We can recognize Norman arches among some of the ruined monastic buildings, and in the crypt of the church. We can tell that the choir of the Norman church was rebuilt in the thirteenth century because the pointed clerestory windows have no tracery, the triforium arches have simple plate tracery, the capitals of the arcade arches have stiff-leaved foliage, and each bay in the roof is divided into six parts. The Norman nave lasted longer than the choir and as we can see from the windows and from the lierne vaulting it was rebuilt in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

In the Middle Ages most churches had paintings on the walls of scenes out of the Bible or the lives of Saints. At Canterbury some of these have been revealed by removing the layers of whitewash put on since the Reformation. In the north aisle there is a painting of the vision of a stag bearing the crucified Christ between his horns; in St. Anselm's chapel there is a painting of St. Paul at Malta shaking the viper from his hand. Medieval churches were altogether more colourful than modern Protestant ones; pictures, not only on walls but also in stained glass, helped to keep the sacred stories in the minds of the congregation in the days when there were very few books and not many people could read. At Canterbury there remain many splendid medieval windows: for instance in the north aisle there is a series of scenes from the New Testament including the Adoration of the Magi, the Feast at Cana, and the Parable of the Sower, while in the chapel of St. Thomas there are roundels of glass illustrating the miracles wrought at St. Thomas's tomb.

Canterbury cathedral has many tombs with effigies of medieval people. The Black Prince lies there and on his tomb is his effigy in the plate armour that he wore in the Hundred Years' War. There are many tombs of archbishops with effigies wearing full regalia. Henry Chichele (died 1443) is shown wearing his vestments for Mass and a mitre and with his pastoral staff by his side. Below him is a model of his almost naked body in death to serve as a reminder of the transitory nature of earthly

magnificence. We can imagine that when he celebrated Mass at the high altar with vessels of precious metal he wore vestments of costly material like those listed above in the inventory of Fountains Abbey, or like those we can still see in a fine arts museum such as the Victoria and Albert.

Bishops and archbishops were, like abbots, not only the heads of their churches but also great landlords and sometimes great statesmen as well. They travelled about the countryside with a considerable retinue of servants and secretaries to visit their estates, to examine their churches and to attend the king. They had seals to affix to documents requiring their signature and in the British Museum several of these are displayed. Archbishop Stephen Langton (1150-1228) had a fawn-coloured seal showing a bishop holding a pastoral staff in his left hand and blessing with his right.

It is worth examining in a little detail the bishop's work in visiting his churches and monasteries. The examination into the lives and work of the clergy or monks was very detailed, and when the results had been carefully considered the visitor delivered verbal injunctions in Chapter. For instance at the Monastery of Abingdon in 1423 Archbishop Chichele found a good deal to say including the following: disciplinary officers should not show favouritism; habitual backsliders should be prescribed seven days of silence; there should be no eating and drinking in private rooms at unauthorized hours; a fifth lock should be added to the chest where the seal of the convent is kept, and the key must be in the Abbot's possession; a chief steward should be appointed to tour the abbey manors at least twice a year to see to stock and repairs. The visiting archbishop in fact looked carefully into every aspect of the life of the monastery.

One of the greatest of the archbishops of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, was murdered in the north-west transept of the Cathedral as a result of some angry words spoken by King Henry II. This murder and Henry's penance were the beginning of the pilgrimages to Canterbury.<sup>1</sup> The murder took hold of people's imagination to such an extent that it is represented in churches all over the country. Roof bosses at Norwich Cathedral show St. Thomas being murdered and Henry II doing penance and

<sup>1</sup> See Dean Stanley, *Memorials of Canterbury Cathedral*. Chapter on Becket.

being scourged. In Canterbury itself the thirteenth-century stained glass windows in the Chapel of St. Thomas have representations of his early tomb in the crypt of the church, of his later splendid shrine, of pilgrims coming to Canterbury and of a whole series of miracles wrought at the shrine (Fig. 11). The shrine itself was destroyed at the Reformation when Henry VIII seized all the treasure that had been brought by pious pilgrims. The scene of the pilgrimage is recalled to-day simply by the worn steps leading to the chapel and by the ridge and furrow worn in the stone floor round the place where the shrine used to stand.

The veneration with which the relics of saints were regarded in the Middle Ages is illustrated by a story recounted by Jocelin of Brakelond in his *Chronicle of the Abbey* where St. Edmund was buried. He says that 'In the year of Grace 1198 the glorious martyr Edmund desired to terrify our Convent and to teach it that his body should be guarded with greater reverence and care.' He then describes how in the middle of the night one of the candles by the shrine fell on to the wooden table and started to burn some rubbish underneath. Luckily it was just before the hour of Matins and the master of the vestry was able to arouse the monks who arrived on the scene to find flames raging all round the shrine. They were able to put out the fire with cold water but they found that the silver plates had fallen off the shrine because the wood beneath had been burnt. It was as a result of this fire and the making of the new shrine that the Abbot decided to see the body of the saint for himself.

Jocelin described how the Abbot did this secretly in the night with twelve associates. They removed the lid of the coffin and found the saint with his head, which was cut off at the martyrdom, rejoined to his body just as it was to be in the miracle story. The Abbot touched the saint's body and several of the brethren were there to witness it so they wrote down what they had done and put it into the coffin before they nailed the lid on again.

The spirit of pilgrimages and the desire to see relics is by no means dead in Catholic countries: thousands go to Lourdes every year hoping to be healed, and the body of Saint Clare, the friend of Saint Francis, lies displayed for all to see at Assisi. In England there has also been a revival of pilgrimage, notably at

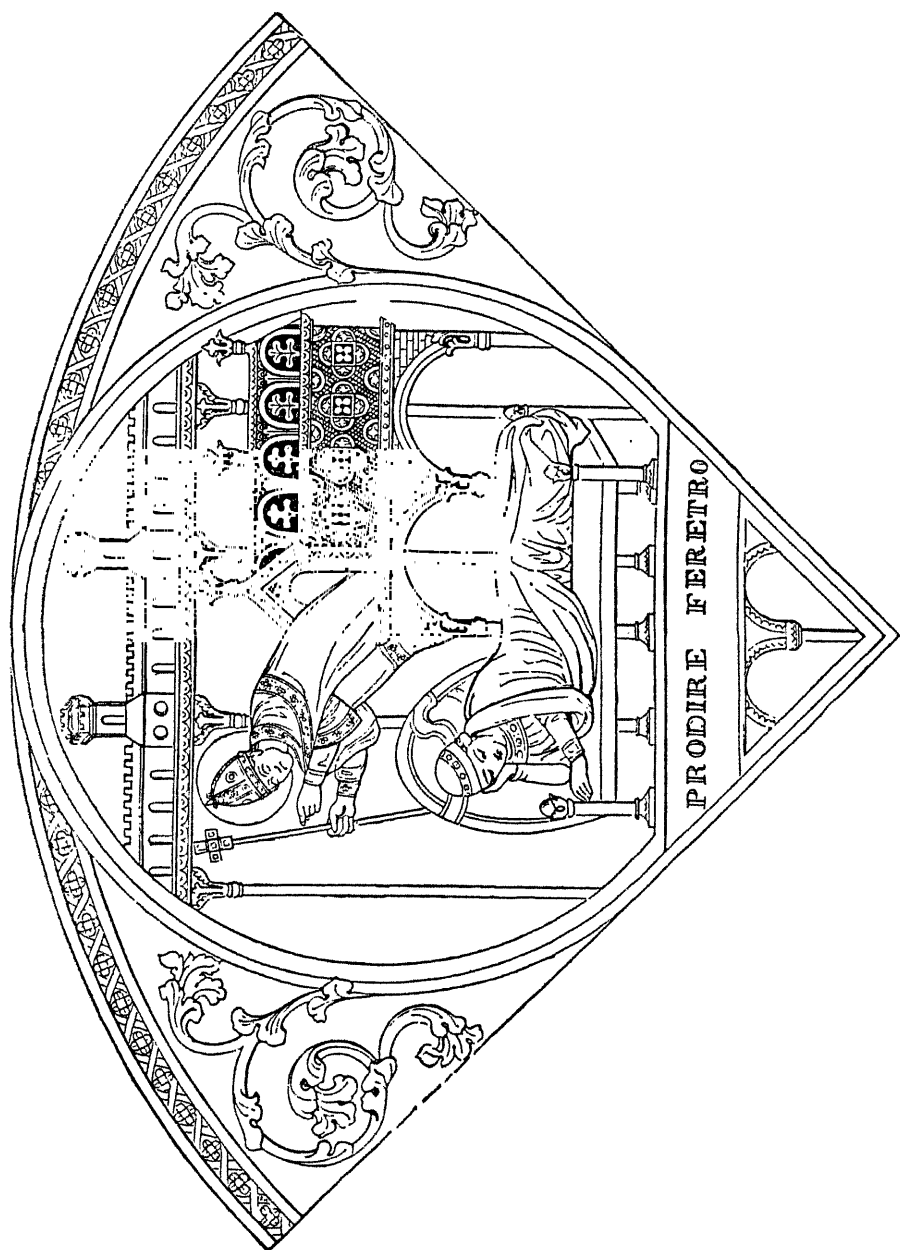


FIG. 11. Representation of Becket's shrine in a painted window in Canterbury Cathedral.



Walsingham in Norfolk, where in the Middle Ages the Virgin is said to have appeared and asked for a church to be built. The site of the original shrine and some of the masonry of the priory church remain, and also the Slipper Chapel about a mile away where the pilgrims used to take off their shoes before walking the last mile barefoot. In 1934 the first pilgrimage since the Reformation took place and in 1948 there was a great pilgrimage of prayer and penance with fourteen groups of men each carrying a nine-foot oak cross for two hundred miles. Now pilgrimages are made every year by Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics.

Relics are not necessarily exposed to view all the time. It is not necessary for people with faith actually to see the body or the bones of the saint to derive benefit from them. At Les Saintes Maries in the south of France where relics of the two Marys are preserved, the coffin containing them is lowered from its place above the chancel arch once a year in view of a crowded church. As the coffin comes down a great shout goes up from the assembled pilgrims and they surge forward and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the priests whose protests are drowned amid the fervent cries, each person struggles to be the first to touch the sacred chest. Sick children are held up and young men leap upon the ropes, such is the desire to be the first. It is in such places as this, and in Italy and Spain, that we can nowadays recapture the feeling of medieval pilgrimage.

If we want to know what kind of people went on pilgrimage in the fourteenth century we have only to read Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*. There was the Crusading knight who had fought for the faith against Saracens and heathens and who came to Canterbury to give thanks for his preservation. With him rode his son, a chivalrous young man thinking mainly of his mistress's love. Members of religious orders are described by Chaucer as going on the pilgrimage merely for the fun of the journey and of meeting people; these include the dainty Prioress, the greedy Monk, and the immoral Friar. Trade was represented by a wool merchant trading between England and Flanders, several members of a guild and a cloth maker. The Wife of Bath had been on a great many other pilgrimages, to Jerusalem three times, to Rome, to Compostella and obviously enjoyed travelling for its own sake. The poor Parson and his brother the Plowman

were, apart from the knight, probably the most disinterested pilgrims.

This group of twenty-nine pilgrims made their pilgrimage on horseback or on foot each carrying their scrips and water bottles and food for the journey. They had to stay at hostels or inns of which there were plenty on the route, and at Canterbury itself there are several inns reputed to have been pilgrims' hostels. The city records show that, at the times of the jubilee pilgrimages every fifty years, the innkeepers and tradesmen tended to take advantage of the pilgrimages in much the same way as nowadays, in Seville for instance at Easter, hotel prices are raised because people will pay a great deal to be there to see the processions. Chaucer, in *The Supplementary Tale*,<sup>1</sup> lodges his pilgrims at the Checker of the Hope, an inn which still exists and in parts may be seen to date back to the Middle Ages.

The main aim of the pilgrims would be to go to pray at the shrine of the martyr. At the cathedral door they were sprinkled with holy water by a monk and then they went up the worn steps to the Chapel of St. Thomas in the east end. Here they shuffled round with other crowds of pilgrims gazing at the wonderful gold shrine and splendid array of treasure that rich pilgrims had brought. Erasmus, visiting the shrine at the time of the Reformation, says that one of the monks with a white wand pointed out to the admiring visitors each of the most valuable gifts and told them who had given it. Chaucer in *The Supplementary Tale*, wrote :

‘ Then passed they forth boisterously, goggle-eyed,  
Kneeled down before the shrine, and busily their beads  
They prayed to Saint Thomas as best they could ;  
And then the holy relics each man with his mouth  
Kissed, as a goodly monk the names told and taught.’

There must have been guardians to keep watch on all these valuables but there is no watching loft at Canterbury as there is at St. Albans.

To prove that they had been to Canterbury, pilgrim's would buy the little souvenirs of bishops' heads and other devices that we sometimes find in museums. As Chaucer said :

<sup>1</sup> Published by the Percy Society. Vol. 26. Here the spelling is modernized.

‘ Then as the manner and custom is, signs they bought,  
 So that their neighbours should know where they had been.  
 Each man set his silver in such things as he liked,  
 And in the meanwhile the miller had pinned  
 His chest full of Canterbury brooches.’

. . .

‘ Then they set their signs upon their heads, and some upon  
 their caps  
 And then dinnerwards they began to go.’

Canterbury was famous not only for its pilgrim shrine but also for its Benedictine monastery. Benedictine monasteries were the centres of learning and they produced sacred books, commentaries on the Bible and sometimes secular histories such as the one that Matthew Paris wrote at St. Albans. These books were all written by hand with a reed pen on parchment and sometimes they were beautifully illuminated in colour and in gold leaf. Sometimes as in a Martyrology in the British Museum which was written in England in the twelfth century at Canterbury, only the capital letters at the beginning of paragraphs were illuminated, but often whole pages contain highly coloured pictures of saints or scenes from the Bible.

In such a brief survey we have not exhausted the wonders of so large a building as Canterbury Cathedral but we have tried to pick out features in it which help to show us how it and many other cathedrals were used in the Middle Ages.

### THE PARISH CHURCH

The Parish Church is the church that most of us know best, but many people do not realize that even industrial towns which grew up in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sometimes have medieval churches. Birmingham has several churches which are relics of the villages that were engulfed as the city spread over them. Luton, Bedfordshire, has a fine fifteenth-century church overlooked now by two enormous electricity coolers which puff steam over its squared flint and stone tower.

Luton church has a west tower, a nave and two aisles, two transepts, two chapels, a chancel and a vestry, and it is one of the largest parish churches in the country. The predominating period

is perpendicular as can be seen from the large windows with mullions going right to the top of the flattened arches, but there is a decorated window in the tower, and the baptistery which surrounds the font has buttressed gables with quatrefoils, crockets and finials. The font itself, and one of the transept arches which has stiff-leaved foliage, are thirteenth-century, but the east window, which has three lancet windows and clustered columns, is a nineteenth-century attempt to reconstruct thirteenth century work. (Fig. 12.)

There are no mural paintings or ancient stained glass at Luton, but a good many fittings<sup>1</sup> remain in the church to show us how medieval Catholics used it. Two broken stoups can be found just inside the north and south doors respectively; they once held holy water so that people could cross themselves on entering. The rood screen has been moved to enclose the organ, and the crucifix that hung above it has gone, but there are some steps in the thickness of the north pillar of the choir arch which have been worn by those who must have passed up them to the rood loft. There is evidence also that once there were more altars in the church than are used now. A piscina in the south aisle indicates that there was an altar there, perhaps for the chapel of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, a fifteenth-century guild<sup>2</sup> founded for maintaining a priest and for other purposes. Another piscina still exists in the Wenlock Chapel beside an altar which has been reconstructed from medieval fragments. The Wenlock Chapel was a chantry. It contains the tombs of the Wenlock family and was the place where Masses were sung for their souls. The chantry priest, whose work this was, may have lived in one of the rooms over the porches, though there is no actual evidence of fireplace or altars as there is in some churches to show what these rooms were used for. There is another very small chantry chapel in an arched recess near the high altar. The name of the builder of this chapel can be deduced from the carving: a bear gives us *Bar* and a box of spikenard gives us *Nard*, hence *Barnard*. (Vicar in 1477-92). The Consecrated Host may have been kept here, perhaps during the Feast of Corpus Christi, if marks in the roof left by hooks were really for suspending the pyx as has been surmised.

<sup>1</sup> See notes at the end of the chapter for definitions.

<sup>2</sup> Its illuminated register and account book are in Luton Museum.

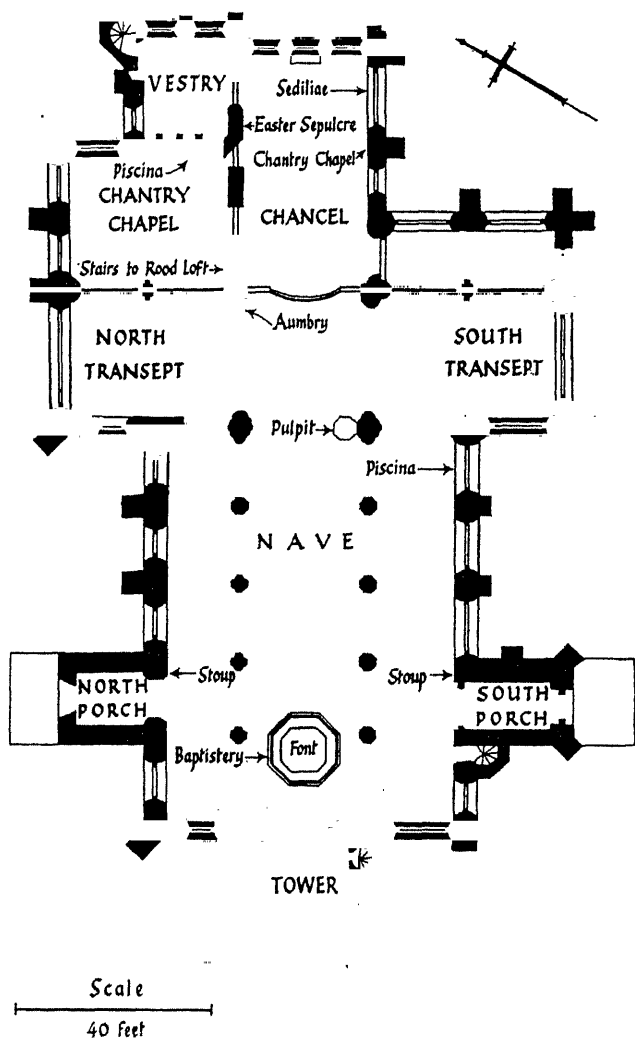


FIG. 12. Plan of Luton Church. Showing positions of medieval features.

*After a drawing in the Guide Book 'Luton Parish Church,' by  
T. G. Hobbs.*

There is a small piscina beside the position where the altar must have been. On the other side of the high altar is the remains of what was probably an Easter Sepulchre where the Host was placed on Holy Thursday. It is a canopied niche in the wall, but, as the floor of the sanctuary has been raised, only half the sepulchre is visible.

The church contains in the north transept, and especially in the Wenlock Chapel, several tombs which give us an idea of the costume of the rich people who used the church. The builder of the Chantry, John Wenlock, built Someries Castle, whose ruins are near the church, and fell in the battle of Tewkesbury during the Wars of the Roses; his gauntlets and helmet hang on the wall. There are several fifteenth-century brasses of men and women; the men wear long gowns with fur and the women wear veils, kirtles and cloaks.

It is often possible to find a brass of a parish priest in a church and at Luton there is one of the fifteenth century. We can see his embroidered chasuble, the ends of the embroidered stole appearing below the chasuble, and over his left arm the maniple. The priest kept his vestments and the church plate in the fifteenth-century vestry. Once there were also chests such as survive in other churches. Medieval plate from parish churches has rarely come down to us; most of the specimens in museums are from cathedrals or abbeys, but occasionally we can find a copper gilt or brass reliquary like those in plate 5.

The work of the parish priest was as extensive then as it is now. He conducted his services in Latin in much the same way as Catholic priests to-day. Sermons were less frequent in the Middle Ages than after the Reformation, and medieval pulpits are not very common. The priest had to see that everyone received communion at least once a year at Easter. He heard confession, visited the sick, baptized the infants, buried the dead and married the young men and women. Some priests were good like Chaucer's Poor Parson of the town.<sup>1</sup>

‘He was rich in holy thought and work.

He also was a learned man, a clerk.

. . .

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Neville Coghill's version of *The Canterbury Tales* published by Penguin.

He much disliked extorting tithe or fee,  
 Nay rather he preferred beyond a doubt  
 Giving to poor parishioners round about  
 From his own goods and Easter offerings.

. . .

Wide was his parish, with houses far asunder,  
 Yet he neglected not in rain or thunder,  
 In sickness or in grief, to pay a call  
 On the remotest whether great or small.

. . .

He did not set his benefice to hire  
 And leave his sheep encumbered in the mire.  
 Or run to London to earn easy bread  
 By singing masses for the wealthy dead.'

Not all priests were like Chaucer's. Langland in *Piers Plowman* gives us another kind of priest in Sloth.<sup>1</sup>

'I have visited no feeble folk, fettered in prison ;

. . . . .

I have been priest and parson, thirty winters past,  
 But can neither sol-fa, nor sing, nor read Saints' lives  
 But I can find a hare in a field or furrow,  
 Better than in *beatus vir* or *beati omnes*  
 I can construe a clause to a class of parishioners.'

Priests like Sloth would have been reported by the churchwardens to the archdeacon's court and reprimanded by him when he visited the parish church to inquire into the smooth running of its affairs. Medieval visitation records are not easily available, and are in any case in Latin, but later ones can often be tracked down in County Record Offices or Cathedral Muniment Rooms.

At the Reformation inventories were made of the plate not only of monasteries but also of parish churches, especially in the reign of Edward VI. Unfortunately the Edwardian inventory for Luton has not survived, but others of places near by are

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Nevill Coghill's translation published by Phoenix House.

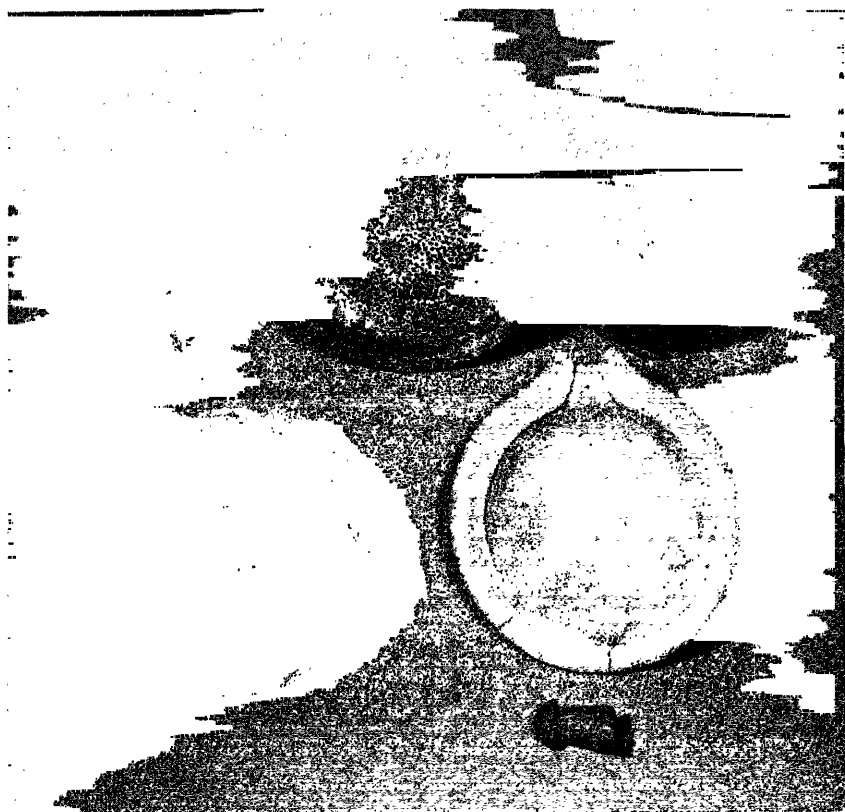


PLATE 1. ROMAN COOKING UTENSILS FROM VERULAMIUM, ST. ALBANS.

*Above : Skillet, colander, cooking pot. Below : Dish, pestle and mortar.*  
*Photographed by C. C. Doncaster, with permission of the Curator.*

PLATE 2. ROMAN DINING-ROOM SCENE.

*From a mid-third century A.D. monument at Trier, Gaul. See page 45.*  
*Reproduced from a photograph in Verulamium Museum.*



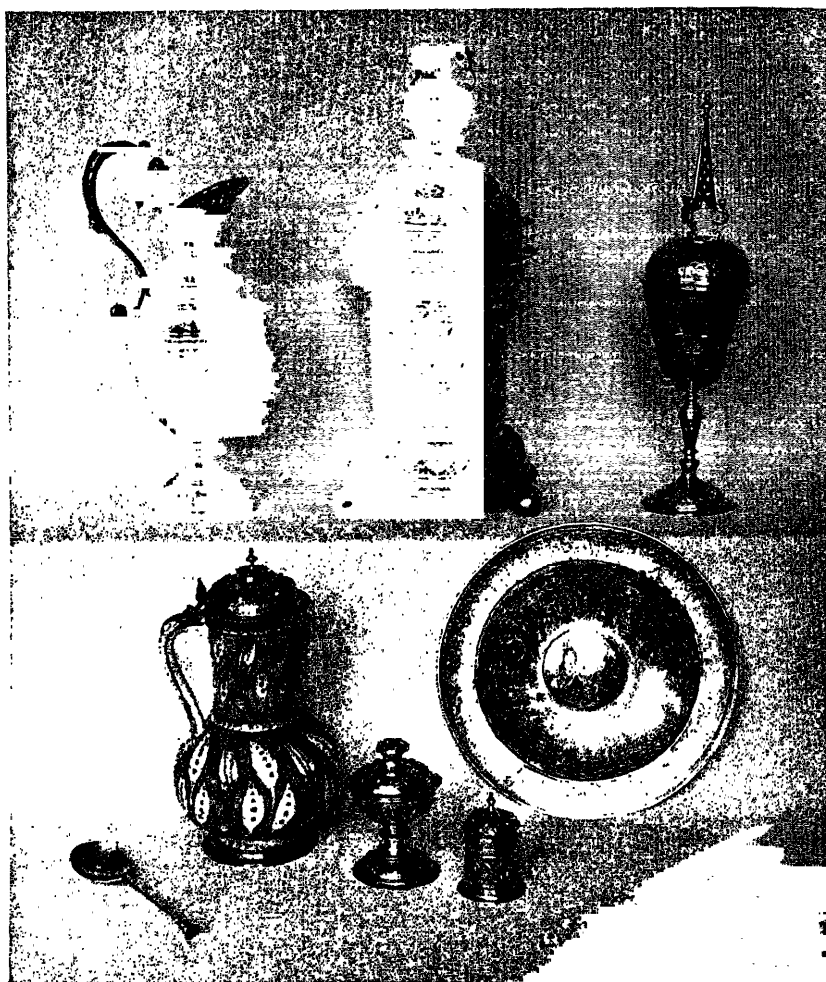


PLATE 3. ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEOAN TABLEWARE

*Above* : Silver-gilt ewer, 1583-4 ; Mostyn salt, silver-gilt, 1586-7 ; silver-gilt cup, 1599-1600, and Jacobean cover.

*Below* : Scal-head spoon, 1592 ; Turkish earthenware jug mounted in silver-gilt, 1580 ; small silver-gilt salt, 1577-8 ; and caster for pepper or spice, 1563-4, both from Mostyn Hall plate ; one of a set of six engraved silver-gilt plates, 1573-4 ; one of a set of twelve knives with carved and jewelled ivory handles, 1607.

*Photographed by C.C. Doncaster, with permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*



PLATE 4. A TEA PARTY. Attributed to William Collins, about 1725.  
*Photographed by C. C. Doncaster, with permission of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

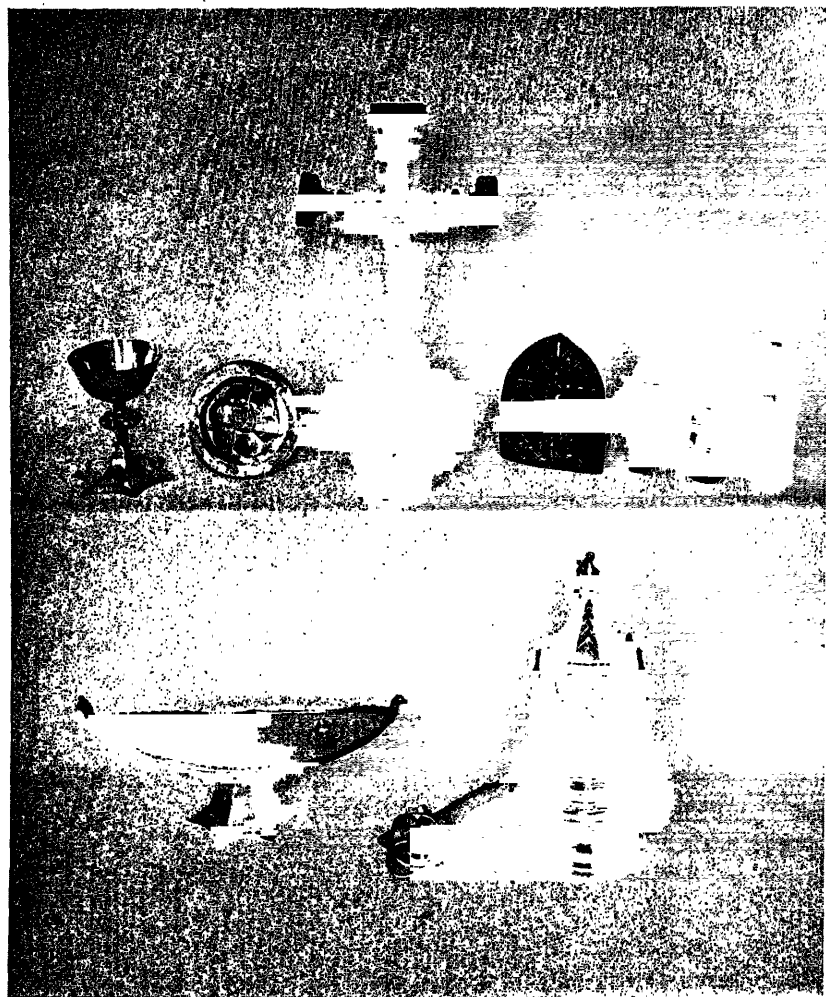


PLATE 5. MEDIEVAL CHURCH PLATE

*Above* : Fifteenth century silver-gilt chalice and paten; thirteenth century copper-gilt altar cross; fourteenth century pyx; fourteenth century copper-gilt pax; fifteenth century brass reliquary.

*Below* : Fourteenth century incense boat and censer from Ramsey Abbey.

*Photographed by C. C. Doncaster, with permission from the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

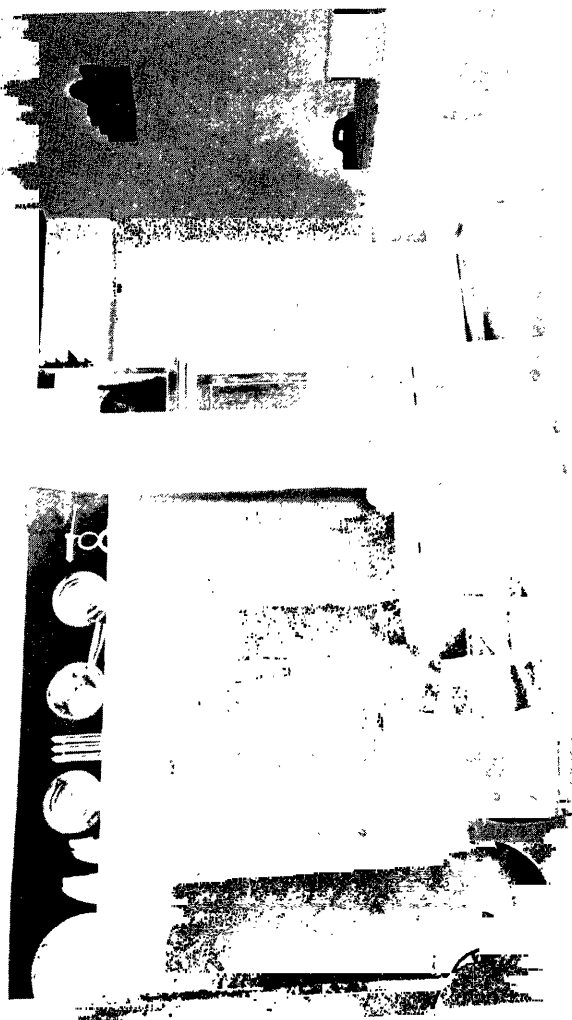


PLATE 6. RECONSTRUCTED WELSH FARMHOUSE KITCHEN.  
*Reproduced by permission of the National Museum of Wales, Folk Museum.*

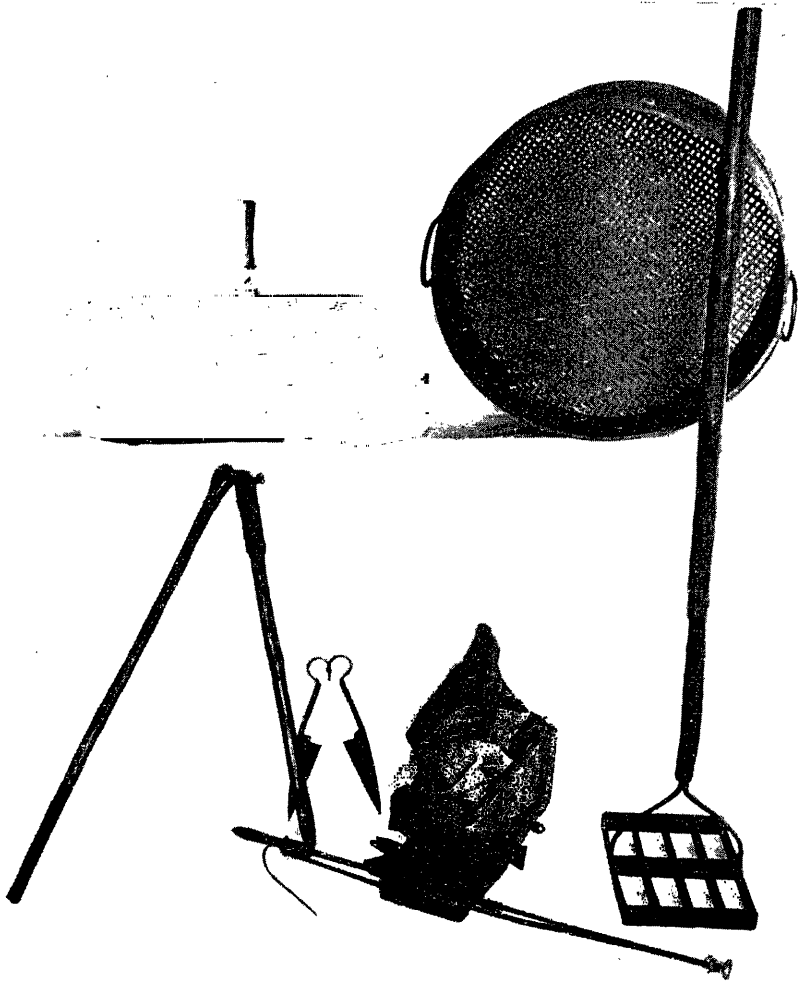


PLATE 7. OLD AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS FROM LUTON  
MUSEUM

*Above :* Seed-lip ; winnowing sieve.

*Below :* Flail ; sheep shears ; fiddle drill ; barley hummeller.

*Photographed by C. C. Doncaster, with permission of the Curator of Luton Museum.*

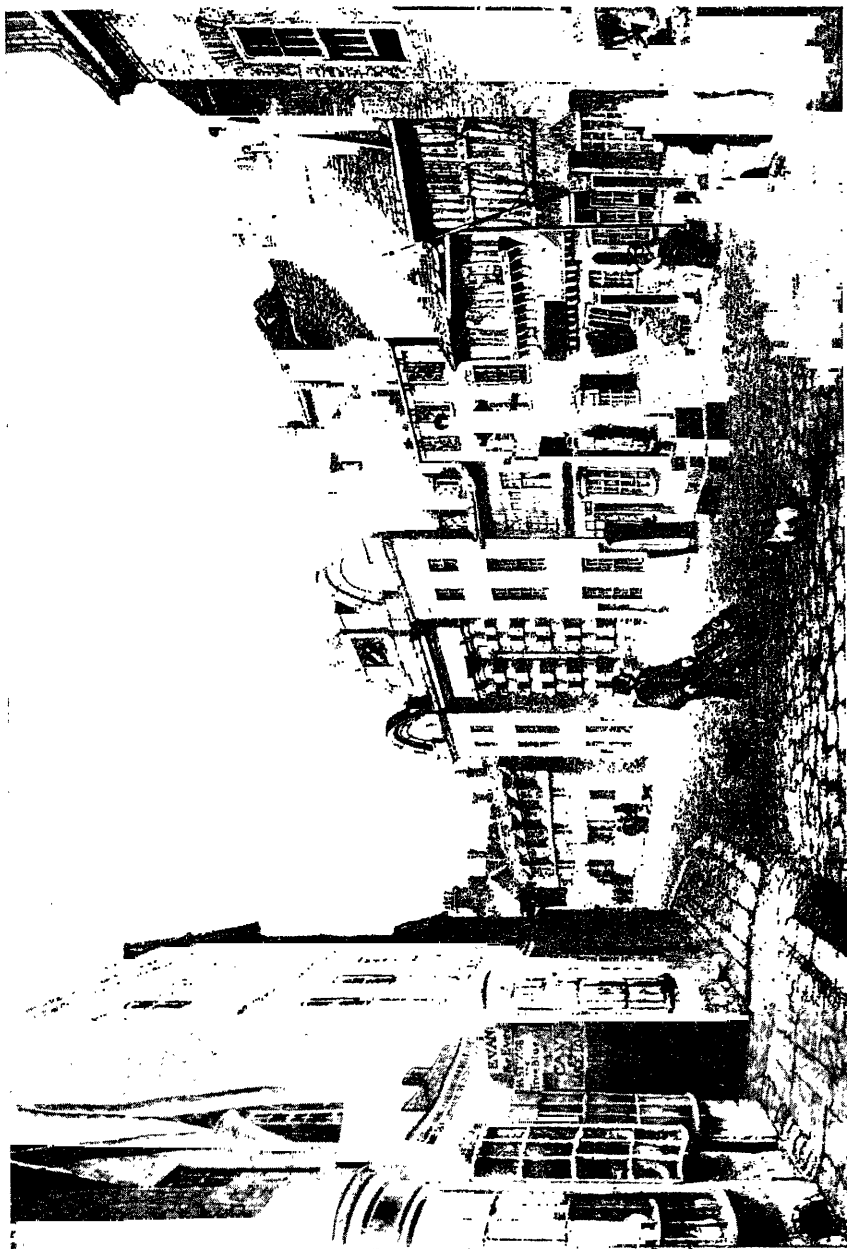
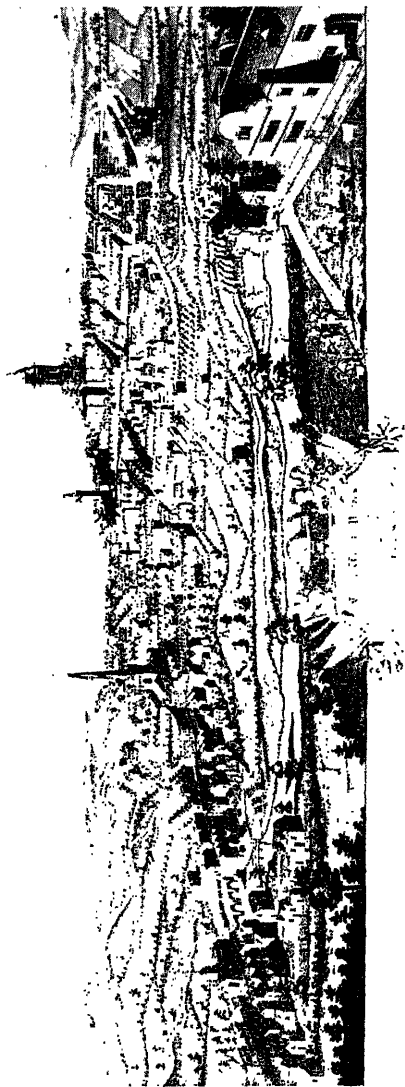


PLATE 8. HIGH CROSS STREET, LEICESTER IN 1826.  
From an engraving by John Flower in the Newark Houses Museum, Leicester.  
*Reproduced by permission of the Curator of the City Museum.*

THE EAST PROSPECT OF BIRMINGHAM.



THE SOUTH WEST PROSPECT OF BIRMINGHAM IN THE COUNTY OF WARWICK.



PLATE 9. TWO VIEWS OF BIRMINGHAM. Published in 1732.

available<sup>1</sup> and they give an idea of the plate<sup>2</sup> possessed by a parish church. In 1552 Houghton Regis had three chalices of gilt, two crosses, two pyxes, a pair of censers, a pax and two pewter candlesticks. For vestments there were two copes, one of linen and one of russet worsted, thirteen old vestments, 'and the others were taken when the Church was robbed'. Besides this there were various hangings, a pall, linen cloths, towels and corporas cases. These inventories were made to find out what church possessions could be sold for the king's profit, so it is probable that not everything was put down; it is also likely that, as at Houghton Regis, many of the things had been taken earlier. Archbishop Gray of York in 1250 gives a list<sup>3</sup> of what the parishioners were to provide in their church; and on visitations the churches' property would be checked to see that all was there. As well as the plate mentioned at Houghton Regis there should have been a vase for holy water, an osculatory, a pyx for the Corpus Christi, a chrismatory for the holy oils, sacred images, and the principal vestments which were a chasuble, an alb, an amice, a stole and a maniple, as well as the copes mentioned above.

Some churches have records giving details of the Catholic features restored under Mary Tudor. At Wymondham, Norfolk, the monastic church became the parish church at the Dissolution and the Churchwardens' Accounts 1552-64 show the attempts to restore the old order. Frankincense was bought for 10d., 2d. was paid to the sexton for wiping out the Bible texts that had probably been put up in Edward VI's reign, 1s. 6d. and 2s. 10d. respectively were paid to have the two holy water stoups put back, and 6d. was paid to restore the rood to its position above the screen.

In Elizabeth's reign the Church of England settlement was finally established. At Heybridge, Essex, the Churchwardens' Accounts for 1559 show the expenses of carrying out the Act of Uniformity and Elizabeth's Injunctions.<sup>5</sup>

'Of John Martyn for the timber that was about the rood loft 3s.

For one homily book 10d.

<sup>1</sup> Alcuin Club Collections. *Edwardian Inventories for Bedfordshire*.

<sup>2</sup> See notes at the end of the chapter for definitions.

<sup>3</sup> See B. L. Cutts. *Parish Priests and their People*.

<sup>4</sup> Guide Book to Wymondham Abbey.

<sup>5</sup> *Essex History from Essex Sources*.



Laid out for carrying of the cross out of the chancel [page torn].

Laid out to John Harrode for whiting of the Church where the rood loft was 6d.

Laid out when the bible was bought [page torn].

When the service book was bought [page torn].

Laid out at the Visitation 20d.

For Whiting 12d.

For the Injunctions 6d.

For pulling down the altar 2d.

Paid to John Harrode for blotting out the images of the glass windows 4d.

Paid to Rowlande for pulling down of the rood loft and mending of the place 12d.

For the Commandments 16d.

In this church evidently the rood loft and cross and the high altar were taken down, the stained glass windows were taken out, and the church was whitewashed perhaps to cover up mural paintings. An English service book and Bible were bought so that the services could be carried out in English. Sometimes, as at Luton, we can still see the place where these valuable Bibles were chained.

Sometimes in a parish chest or in the local Record Office a church terrier may be found. There is one for 1707 for Luton. The vicarage house was timbered with a tiled roof and had an orchard and two small closes of church land. Tithes of hay, hemp, flax, turnips, cows, wood, lambs, pigs and poultry are due to the vicar. Payments have to be made to him in kind for all grass and in money for milch cows, dried cows or calves or bullocks. The tithe of wool is paid at shearing time and the tithe of lambs in March; the tenth or seventh pig has to be paid at a month old; two eggs are due for a hen, three for a cock. The vicar also has Easter offerings. Marriage with banns cost 2s. 6d. and with license 5s., burial cost 8d. and christening 6d., and every person that died worth £50 had to pay a mortuary fee of 10s. Many of these tithes and fees date back to the Middle Ages when each parish church had a huge tithe barn for the priest to put all the payments he received in kind. Luton's tithe barn was destroyed in the nineteenth century.

Other documents in the parish chest which throw light on the part the church played in the community are those relating to charities, such as leases of charitable lands and lists of charitable donations. At Luton in 1624 Thomas Crawley of Kimpton and Edward Crawley of Barton left land 'to sustain and amend the parish church and steeple for ever'. In 1673 Cornelius Bigland, barber surgeon, left £6 a year for clothing, maintaining, schooling and educating six poor children of Luton. In 1715 Sir Theophilus Napier left to the 'poor of Luton conformable to the Church of England', £5 a year in bread to be distributed every Sunday morning immediately after divine service.

Parish churches are the most common medieval buildings which still exist yet they are among the most difficult to imagine in use in medieval times. Some knowledge of Catholic ritual and of the sources quoted above is necessary so that details which survive in the buildings will not be missed.

Church buildings make a fascinating study from several different angles. They are most usually looked at from the architectural point of view but it is hoped that the foregoing pages have shown that it is more interesting and just as easy to study them from the point of view of how they were used. We have tracked down information about the lives and work of the priests, bishops and monks, have found out what the church buildings used to look like and have recalled some of the scenes that used to take place there. With these things in our minds when we visit old church buildings we should be able to make the past live.

#### SOME OBJECTS FROM MEDIEVAL CHURCHES TO BE FOUND IN MUSEUMS

Altar vessels are usually made of precious metal which is sometimes enamelled. Ivory as well as precious metal or enamel was used for reliquaries, pastoral staffs, crosses, book covers, pyxes and diptychs. Vestments are of embroidery, gold or silk tissue.

ALTARPIECE : painted wooden or carved stone back to altar.

TABERNACLE : contains the consecrated host in a pyx (see below) ; used to be suspended over the altar but in Catholic churches now stands on the altar ; in either place usually covered with a canopy of fine material and always has a light burning in front of it.

**CIBORIUM** : vessel in which host is put when it is inside the tabernacle.

\***ALTAR CLOTHS** : three cloths of white linen.

**ALTAR FRONTAL** : cloth of fine material to hang down over the front of the altar.

**CENSER OR THURIBLE** : swinging container for burning incense.

**INCENSE BOAT OR SHIP** : container for carrying incense in.

**INCENSE SPOON**.

**CORPORAL OR CORPORAS CLOTH OR CASE** : linen cloth on which the consecrated elements are placed during celebration and with which they are subsequently covered.

**PALL** : may mean a hearse cloth or an altar frontal or a canopy fabric or the linen square covering the chalice at Mass.

**CHALICE** : goblet for holding wine at Mass or communion ; in the Middle Ages it was bowl-shaped, from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries it was cup-shaped.

**PATEN** : plate for offering consecrated bread at Mass or communion.

**CRUETS** : small containers used for wine and water in the Middle Ages ; after the Reformation, when laity as well as priests were offered wine, large flagons were used for a time ; later, cruets were again universally used.

**PYX** : small box in which the consecrated host was suspended over the altar or in which the reserved sacrament was carried to visit sick, etc.

**CHRISMATORY** : container for the three oils blessed on Holy Thursday ; oil for the sick, oil for baptism and oil for confirmation and ordination.

**OSCULATORY OR PAX** : image of Christ or the Virgin formerly kissed by priest and people at Mass as a sign of universal brotherhood.

**CANDLESTICK, CROSS and BOOK COVER** for the altar.

**PROCESSIONAL CROSS**.

**CROZIER** or Pastoral staff carried by bishop or abbot.

**MITRE** : A bishop's tall cap, deeply cleft at the top, the outline of the front and back having the outline of a pointed arch : worn also by certain abbots.

**ALMS DISH** : used after the Reformation for collecting alms.

**RELIQUARY** : casket for the relics of saints.

**DIPTYCH AND TRIPTYCH** : small carved screen folding into two or three parts and forming a portable reredos.

**VESTMENTS WORN FOR MASS**.

*Chasuble* : oval garment usually richly embroidered hanging down back and front.

\**Amice* : white cloth for covering the head.

\**Alb* : white linen tunic.

*Girdle*.

\* These objects are not preserved in museums but they are listed here so that they can be defined.

*Maniple*: band hanging over left arm; originally a towel for receiving something precious such as the paten.

*Stole*: originally a scarf round the neck, now a long band.

PILGRIM badges and souvenirs.

ILLUMINATED manuscripts from monasteries and cathedrals: chronicles, commentaries on the Bible, psalters and prayer books.

MONASTIC and cathedral seals.

## MEDIEVAL FEATURES TO LOOK OUT FOR IN CHURCH BUILDINGS

SROUP: container for the holy water with which people made the sign of the cross on entering; placed near the doorway.

PISCINA: niche in the wall with a drain for carrying away the water after the altar vessels had been washed; it usually indicates the presence of an altar.

AUMBRY: a small cupboard near the altar for keeping the holy vessels in; sometimes it is now only a rectangular cavity in the wall with holes at the side for hinges.

ROOD SCREEN: screen dividing chancel from nave in order to preserve the sanctuary as a place apart from the laity; above the screen hung a rood or crucifix; the top of some screens was a platform and the stairs to reach it sometimes remain in the supporting pillar even though the screen itself may have gone; the platform was used as a music gallery and occasionally for celebrations of Mass.

CHANCERY CHAPEL: small chapel built for a priest to sing or say masses for the soul of the owners and his family.

PRIEST'S ROOM: room over the porch which may have been lived in by a chantry priest or used as a school by the parish priest.

EASTER SEPULCHRE: a large niche in the wall where the host was put on Holy Thursday to symbolize the descent of Christ into Hell.

HAGIOSCOPE OR SQUINT: a slit in a pillar made so that people in a side aisle could see the high altar.

MISERICORD: a shelf under a seat providing something to lean on for a person standing in front of the tipped up seat; often has carving of animals, domestic life, heraldry.

SEDILIA: stone seat near the altar for those assisting at Mass to sit on.

FONT: used for baptism; sometimes has carvings of the seven sacraments, the four evangelists or the symbols of the passion.

REREDOS: ornamental screen or facing of stone or wood covering the wall at the back of the altar.

CHAPTER HOUSE: room where the monks or canons met to discuss their affairs and where the visitation sermon was given.

LIBRARY: cathedral libraries often contain manuscripts.

SHRINE OF SAINT: rare, but sometimes the mutilated pedestal remains.

**WATCHING LOFT :** where the guardians sat to watch over the treasure at a shrine.

**CLOISTER :** where monks or canons walked, meditated, and studied : sometimes washing places and bookcases remain.

**MONKS' DOOR AND ABBOT'S DOOR :** elaborate doors into the cloister which may still remain even when the cloister itself has gone.

**REMAINS OF MURAL PAINTINGS :** illustrating the Bible or the lives of the saints.

**ROOF BOSSES :** illustrating scenes from the Bible and from the lives of the saints, domestic life and heraldry.

**PRE-REFORMATION PULPITS, PEWS and PARISH CHESTS** exist but they are rare.

**ALMS BOX AND DOLE CUPBOARD** are usually post-Reformation.

**ENGRAVED BRASS SLABS OR EFFIGIES** of priests, bishops and abbots showing vestments and of laity showing armour or civilian clothes.

Near a parish church can sometimes be found a medieval priest's house or a tithe barn.

**SITES OF MONASTIC BUILDINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR :**

Church, cloister, refectory or dining room, dormitory, warming room, abbot's room, chapter house, guest house, scriptorium or writing room, parlour, infirmary with its own chapel and kitchen, kitchen, storehouses, malthouse, bakehouse, mill, well, gates, walls.

## BRIEF OUTLINE OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES IN CHURCHES

**SAXON :** Eighth to eleventh century.

Widespanned round arches, windows with baluster shaft, polygonal apse or east end.

*Examples :* Earls Barton, Northants ; Sompting, Sussex ; Wing, Bucks.

**NORMAN :** Eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Round arches, thick pillars, narrow windows with no tracery, round apse, square tower, barrel-shaped roof vaulting.

*Decorations :* Zig-zag and billet moulding, cushion and voluted capitals.

*Examples :* Stewkley, Bucks ; Durham Cathedral ; nave of Winchester Cathedral.

**EARLY ENGLISH :** Thirteenth century.

Tall, narrow lancet windows, often in groups of three, pointed arches with plain recessed mouldings, beginnings of geometric tracery, broach spire, bays of roof vault divided by ribs into four or six parts in cathedrals, high pitched rafter roof in smaller churches.

*Decoration* : deeply undercut stiff-leaved foliage capitals, cross-leaved pattern on arch mouldings, diaper pattern on flat surfaces.

*Examples* : Eaton Bray, Beds. ; Salisbury Cathedral ; choir at Canterbury Cathedral.

**DECORATED** : Fourteenth century.

Larger windows with geometric or flowing tracery, arches with many decorated mouldings, ogival arches, crockets and gables, lierne stone vaults with roof bosses in cathedrals, high pitched wooden roofs in small churches ; tall spires ; pierced parapet ; brasses and effigies.

*Decoration* : Capitals with identifiable foliage such as oak, vine, etc., ball-flower ornament.

*Examples* : Lantern at Ely Cathedral ; chapter house at Southwell Minster ; choir at Norwich Cathedral.

**PERPENDICULAR** : Fifteenth century.

Very large windows with mullions going right up to the top and horizontal transoms ; ogival and depressed arches ; towers and battlemented parapets ; fan tracery in roof vault or low-pitched rafter roof, or hammer-beam roof.

Brasses and effigies, occasionally pulpits and pews.

*Decoration* : Cresting of upright leaves, panelling, capitals octagonal or with conventional foliages, shallow and square in outline.

*Examples* : Central tower at York Minster ; Canterbury Cathedral nave ; many parish churches.

**SIXTEENTH CENTURY**

Flatter arches surmounted by square mouldings ; perpendicular windows.

Pulpit, pews, parish chest, dole cupboard ; effigies and brasses.

*Examples* : King's College chapel, Cambridge ; Windsor Castle chapel ; Henry VII's chapel, Westminster Abbey.

**SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

Classical pillared portico surmounted by pediment, round-headed windows with plain glass, semi-circular arches and classical capitals, gallery each side and at the west end, coffered plaster ceiling sometimes enclosing paintings.

Pulpit, altar rails, lectern, wall tombs.

Wood carving on stalls, pulpit, pews and screen of fruit, flowers, foliage and cherubs.

*Decoration* : As in contemporary houses.

*Examples* : London city churches and St. Paul's Cathedral.

## EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

As seventeenth century.

'Three-decker' pulpit, box pews, gallery, brass candelabra, wall tombs.

*Examples:* St. Martin's in the Fields, London; Birmingham Cathedral. Eighteenth century Gothic: Warwick church; east end, Durham Cathedral.

## NINETEENTH CENTURY

Much rebuilding and restoring of Gothic churches: porches and vestries added.

Much of decorative detail done in plaster, cast iron or composition instead of stone.

*Examples:* Many suburban parish churches, restorations at St. Albans Abbey and many cathedrals.

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## CHAPTER V

### THE VILLAGE

Most of our modern villages are mentioned in Domesday Book which was a survey made in 1086 for William the Conqueror who wanted to know the value of his newly acquired lands. Some villages have churches dating back to Norman times; a great many more have later medieval churches and these we can study in the way worked out in Chapter 4. A few villages have medieval domestic buildings as well. At Alfriston, Sussex, there is the medieval Priest's House and a medieval Inn. At Flatford Mill, East Bergholt, Suffolk, there is a timber-framed house called Valley Farm which has a hall with a central fireplace, now a brick chimney, and stairs leading up to what must have originally been the solar (see Chapter 3). At Ewelme, Oxfordshire, there is attached to the church a fifteenth-century school which is still used and fifteenth-century almshouses. On the whole these medieval domestic buildings are rare so we will concentrate on the later periods for which there is evidence in most villages. We shall try to find out what the houses were like inside and out, what sort of people lived in them, how these people worked and how their affairs were organized in the days before tractors and improved communications quite altered village life.

The raw material for the study of the village is in the buildings themselves, the local museum and the County Record Office. In addition, these purely local sources can often be supplemented by general descriptions from contemporary novels, poems and diaries.

Old village buildings which are still in use usually contain more recent furniture as their owners have kept pace with changing fashions. For the furniture and utensils contemporary with the buildings we must look in the museum of the nearest town where there may be a reconstructed cottage interior or the kitchen utensils and the tools of some of the craftsmen and farm labourers. To find the real people who lived in the village we have to go to

the local records. For instance wills of the local people give inventories of possessions, the Churchwardens' Accounts will tell us how the church was repaired, the Constable's accounts will describe the work of keeping order, and the Enclosure Map will tell us how much land people owned and who the tenants were.

Most people will find that they can collect evidence for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and some will be lucky enough to find material for earlier periods. Whichever period we study there are certain things to look out for : the kind of houses occupied by labourers, craftsmen and farmers ; the amount of furniture, utensils and land owned by each of these groups of people ; the way in which land was being farmed, and the tools and machinery that were being used at that period ; the kinds of objects that were made in the village ; the local responsibilities that were being taken for the repair of the church, defence, the highway, the poor and the arrangement of village affairs.

#### VILLAGE BUILDINGS

The main buildings in a village are the church, the manor house or hall, the inn, and the farmhouses, cottages and craftsmen's shops. We have already dealt with the background to large houses and to the church so here we will consider the smaller houses, cottages and farms.

Miss Mitford in *Our Village*, which was first published in 1819, gives us a personal description of most of the buildings and of some of the people in a Berkshire village about one hundred and fifty years ago. The shoemaker with his three journeymen worked in his little shop from earliest dawn until after nightfall. The blacksmith lived opposite 'in a gloomy dwelling . . . dark and smoky within and without like a forge'. He was the village constable whose only faults were his fondness for the public house and the fact that when he was called to his official duties to subdue some local affray, he was usually to be found in the middle of it himself. There was a mason, a carpenter, and a wheelwright at whose house the curate lodged when he came from a neighbouring village to carry out his duties in the church. Several washerwomen are mentioned ; there is one who lived in a dilapidated cottage but earned enough money to

provide herself with her favourite luxuries of green tea, gin and snuff.

The Rose Inn was an important centre of activity and its yard was always full of wagons, carts and return chaises. The landlord was a thriving man whose waistcoat had had to be let out twice in the last year. His daughter was very elegant and led a gay social life which took her frequently to the neighbouring town. The village alehouse such as the Rose Inn is a building that we can expect to find to-day, sometimes still with its open hearth and chimney seat. Goldsmith in *The Deserted Village* described the interior of an inn in what he believed were the happy days before the enclosing<sup>1</sup> landlords had driven the population off the land.

‘Imagination fondly stoops to trace  
 The parlour splendours of the festive place ;  
 The whitewash’d wall, the nicely sanded floor,  
 The varnish’d clock that click’d behind the door ;  
 The chest contriv’d a double debt to pay,  
 A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day ;  
 The pictures plac’d for ornament and use,  
 The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose ;  
 The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,  
 With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay ;  
 While broken teacups, wisely kept for show,  
 Rang’d o’er the chimney, glisten’d in a row.’

Miss Mitford during her walks around her village introduces us to a number of other places and people. There was a work-house of which she says ‘all about it is solid, substantial, useful, but so dreary, so cold, so dark’. The parish was unenclosed so the village still enjoyed its common where cricket was played and where the baker, the shoemaker and the wheelwright kept their cows. On the outskirts there was an old mill which in Miss Mitford’s lifetime was pulled down to make way for ‘a huge, staring, frightful, redbrick mill as ugly as a manufactory’.

She mentions a number of farmhouses and cottages. In one rich farmhouse with a well stocked rickyard the farmer gave dinner parties at which there was twice the usual amount of food. ‘Two couples of duck, two dishes of green peas, two turkey

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

poults, two gammon of bacon, two plum puddings : moreover he keeps a single horse chaise and has built and endowed a Methodist chapel'. In contrast to him was a smallholder who worked the land with his sons while his wife and daughters ran the dairy, poultry and the orchard. Different again was the old-fashioned farmeress who 'rose at four in winter and summer, breakfasted at six, dined at eleven in the forenoon, supped at five and was regularly in bed before eight'. She had a great contempt for new agricultural machinery, especially the threshing machine which she believed had none of the character-forming virtues of the flail.

In our own village we shall probably be able to find some of the buildings mentioned by Miss Mitford and it will be useful to know the approximate date of them so that we can decide in which period to study the life of the village. Many small houses have date panels on them but where there are none it is usually possible to deduce the approximate date from the structure of the house. Village architecture followed the main trends laid down in the lists in Chapter 3 but the smaller houses always lagged behind the larger in changes of style. Timber-framed houses with gables and mullioned windows date from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Originally the spaces between the frame were filled with wattle and daub but this may have been replaced by bricks in the seventeenth century. Bricks began to be used in the sixteenth century and brick chimneys and sometimes brick ovens can be found not only on new houses of the period but also added to old houses. Old bricks can be distinguished from modern ones because they are thinner; in the sixteenth century they were jointed with fat mortar flush with the wall surface while in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the joints were thinner. Small stone houses, except in moorland or mountain areas, are not usually earlier than the seventeenth century by which time, owing to the shortage of timber, it was cheaper to quarry local stone than to build in wood. The only notable stonework before the seventeenth century is in the Cotswold area where, owing to the prosperity brought by the wool trade, many fine stone houses were built and survive to the present day. Roofs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were thatched or covered with stone tiles ; from the seventeenth

century red tiles were used and from the nineteenth century slates. Early tiled roofs can be distinguished from later ones because the tiles are always graded with the smallest at the top.

Very often early timber framing has been obscured by later attempts to weather-proof houses where the wattle and daub has decayed or shrunk away from the timber. Tile hung houses commonly found in Kent and Sussex and slate hung houses in Devon and Cornwall date from the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In East Anglia the usual method about the same period was to apply an over-all coat of plaster which quite obscures the timber framing. This was stripped off Paycocke's House at Coggeshall (Essex) to reveal the original timber work. In Essex and in some parts of Kent and Sussex the material used was wooden weather boarding. The most common type of proofing found nowadays in non-stone-bearing areas is nineteenth century cement proofing. With any of these methods of weather-proofing, and especially with the last, the whole of the original structure may be covered but even so the overhanging first floor gives a clue to an old house.

Rows of small houses built of brick may date from the eighteenth century, in which case there is usually some attempt to make the cornice, the doors and the windows stand out, but more probably they will be of nineteenth-century origin. Most villages have a larger brick house dating from the eighteenth and perhaps a stucco house dating from the early nineteenth century.

The usual plan of a cottage or farmhouse was rather like that of a medieval house. The kitchen took the place of the great hall and in the Victorian novels is referred to as the 'house place'; here the family and the farm servants had their meals. There was a large open fireplace where the cooking was done and an oven for baking bread and pastry. Opening off one side of the house place was the parlour and off the other side was the back kitchen with sink and copper. In a farmhouse there would be a dairy and perhaps a bakehouse and a brewhouse as well. In a craftsman's shop, the workshop might open off one side of the kitchen, and the scullery and parlour off the other. The bedrooms were upstairs.

There are descriptions of farm houses in *Adam Bede* by George Eliot and in *The Woodlanders* and *Far from the Madding Crowd* by

Thomas Hardy, but one of the best descriptions is in a less well known novel, *The Doctor* (1834-47) by Robert Southey. His account of a Yorkshire farmhouse kitchen would probably have held good for at least a century before his time. 'As you entered the kitchen there was on the right one of those open chimneys which afford more comfort on a winter's evening than the finest register stove ; in front of the chimney stood a wooden beehive chair, and on each side was a long oak seat with a back to it, the seats serving as chests in which the oaten bread was kept. . . . The great oak table and the chest in the best kitchen which held the household linen bore the same date [1610]. The chimney was well hung with bacon, the rack which covered half the ceiling bore equal marks of plenty ; mutton hams were suspended from other parts of the ceiling ; and there was odour of cheese from the adjoining dairy which the turf fire . . . did not overpower. A few pewter dishes were ranged above the trenchers, opposite the door on a conspicuous shelf.' It is worth keeping a description such as this in mind when we go to visit folk museums because, however well arranged, they are impersonal and lack the homely, lived-in feeling that the novelist can impart.

In our own village it is always worth exploring any old house into which we may be lucky enough to be invited, to see if we can find some of these things. In the kitchen we might find an old fire place with an iron fire back and a chimney seat or a dresser with a few pewter plates. Sometimes an old oven remains ; it may go into the wall like a tunnel, in which case burning wood was put inside to heat it up and then taken out before the bread and pies were baked ; or it may be built on to the outside of the house like a great swelling with a tall chimney above. In many cottages the copper for boiling water remains and is still used. The pump or the well for a group of houses will also probably still be there. Old people in the village can often tell us of the days when they drank well water, ate food raised only in the village and used kitchen utensils and tools many of which were made locally.

There is an increasing number of folk museums which help us to imagine what village life was like one hundred to two hundred years ago, and most of them publish guide books and post-cards. In some of these museums craftsmen's shops and

cottages and farmhouse interiors have been reconstructed. Occasionally as at the Priest's House, West Hoathly, Sussex, the museum itself is an old building but usually the reconstruction is done within a modern or converted building. The Priest's House originally contained a central hall with an open rafter roof and two rooms at each end but it has been modified. In the hall or house place there is an open fireplace with a Sussex wrought iron fire back and firedogs ; beside the fireplace is the oven in the wall and two long-handled peels for getting the bread in and out. There is a dresser with china, an oak gate-leg table and stick-back chairs.

At the Castle Museum, York, there is a reconstruction of the single room in a moorland cottage which was used as kitchen, bedroom and living-room. The four-poster bed has a patchwork quilt, there are various stick-back chairs, a spinning wheel, a small grate with a turf fire and a dresser with crockery. The National Museum of Wales has reconstructed four farmhouse interiors. The kitchen has an open fireplace, brass pans (see plate 6), a dresser, a table laid with wooden bowls and spoons ; the dairy has wooden bowls, churns, moulds, scales, cheese presses ; there is also a parlour and a bedroom. Even an industrial town such as Leicester has, in the Newarke Houses, a reconstructed room of a yeoman farmer of about 1750. The fireplace has all the usual fire irons, the table is laid with pewter tankards, bowls, jugs and iron rushlight holders. The room also contains a large dresser with pewter plates on the shelves, a corner cupboard, several chairs and stools, chests for clothes, a cradle for the baby, a wool winder and a spinning wheel for spinning yarn at home. It is a good display but even the best displays leave much to the imagination. To get a picture of a Leicestershire farmhouse two hundred years ago we have to call to mind the flickering fire, the kettle singing on the hob, the bacon hanging in the chimney to smoke, the bread suspended in a crate to keep it away from the mice, and the farm servants in their smocks sitting down to steaming bowls of soup.

Many small local museums contain old kitchen utensils and table ware. Early plates were made of wood but by the seventeenth century many things such as plates, mugs, salts, candlesticks and pepper pots were being made in pewter. Until the

end of the eighteenth century ale was the principal drink and was drunk out of pewter tankards or horn mugs, but by the beginning of the nineteenth century tea drinking was coming in even in villages and so was china from which to drink it. Cooking utensils include spits for roasting, heavy iron or brass pots which hung on an adjustable crane and were used for stewing and seething, brass saucepans, frying pans and a pestle and mortar. With utensils like these were cooked the enormous meals that Parson Woodforde recorded in his diary. In July, 1785, when he was entertaining a few friends, he had for dinner some pike and friend soles, a nice piece of boiled beef, ham and a couple of fowls, peas and beans, a green goose roasted, gooseberry pies, currant tarts followed by strawberries, cherries, almonds and raisins. A good deal of the food that he ate he obtained, as many other people did, from the surrounding countryside. Hares he coursed with his dogs, game was sent by his friends, and trout, pike and eel he caught in the river near by. He brewed his own small beer and sometimes made mead and cider; wine he bought, but tea, gin, brandy and rum were smuggled in by the local blacksmith, known from his activities as Moonshine Buck.

'Bygone' collections usually include other aspects of social life besides cooking utensils. Apparatus for washing and ironing played an important part in everybody's life when there were no mechanical laundries. The water was heated and the linen boiled in a built-in copper with a fire underneath. In the scullery were large sinks and possibly a mangle which forced heavy stones on rollers over the clothes. There were various types of iron: for instance, a box iron in which a hot stone was put and a goffering iron which pleated lace collars and cuffs by means of two hollow, fluted rollers containing hot bars, the lace being passed between the rollers.

To light the house in the evenings before the days of gas and electricity, people used candles or rush lights inside, and horn lanterns outside. Only the best candles were made of wax; ordinary ones were made of tallow or mutton fat collected from the roasting joint. Rushlights were peeled rushes dipped in mutton fat and held in a pair of nippers on a stand. A horn lantern contained a candle and it had horn instead of glass windows.



Collections of bygones even when they are arranged in reconstructed rooms only give us an idea of the typical or regional cottage or farmhouse interior. If we want to know what individual interiors were like we can turn to inventories. We have seen that in great country houses an inventory made at the death of one of the owners is a valuable guide to the furnishings of the house.

It is worth while considering briefly the inventories of one or two village people<sup>1</sup> to see what they tell us of their lives. Inventories of cottagers are not uncommon; for instance Agnes Linford, a widow who died in Offley, Hertfordshire in 1682 seems to have lived, like many of her contemporaries, in a two-roomed cottage. In the bedroom she had a bed and bedding which is not described. Her only furniture seems to have consisted of three old coffers in which she probably kept her linen and clothes and which she also used as tables and chairs. In her kitchen she had a bolting hutch in which to keep her flour; there was also a frying pan, a pair of fire irons, two kettles and a pottage pot in which to do her cooking. She also had a Bible but apparently no tableware. These scanty belongings were supplemented by over £50 of debts in her favour.

Inventories of more substantial people such as farmers, the richer craftsmen and the parish priest sometimes give an idea of the arrangement of the rooms as well as of the furniture in a house. Edward Gray of Amwell near Ware who died in 1675 was a carpenter. He had a quantity of timber in his yards, sheds and lofts and a grindstone on which to sharpen the tools in his workshop. His single-storied house consisted of a hall, a buttery or storeroom, and two bedrooms described as a parlour and a chamber. The hall was evidently used as a combined dining room and kitchen as both furniture and cooking utensils are listed in it. The furniture included two tables, six stools, one cupboard, five chairs, a looking-glass and 'a little box of drawers'. Tableware consisted of pewter and earthenware and there were napkins and a table-cloth. For cooking there was a spit, and a jack for turning it, pothooks, a gridiron, a kettle, a frying-pan, a pie

<sup>1</sup> The three inventories quoted are in the County Record Office at Hertford. Essex Record Office have printed many others in *Farmhouse and Cottage Inventories of Mid Essex*, 1635-1749.

board and a mortar. The buttery contained tubs for brewing beer and a copper and irons for the weekly wash. Stored in the parlour were two spinning-wheels and the tub in which meat was salted down for the winter. Both the bedrooms contained bedsteads strung with cords instead of springs and covered with rush mats instead of mattresses. There were little beds for servants or children, which could be pushed under the big beds during the day. The bedding consisted of one feather bed and two flock beds, two feather bolsters and three feather pillows, ten pairs of sheets, three pillow cases, and twelve towels but only two blankets, one rug and one set of bed curtains and valance.

Nicholas Woolton priest of Furneaux Pelham, who died in 1687 owned a larger two-storied house of the type beginning to come into fashion among the gentry in Charles II's reign. His dining hall was separate from his kitchen and he had a parlour used as a sitting room, a 'study of books' as befitted a clergyman, a buttery, a dairy, a closet and two bedchambers, one over the hall and the other over the parlour. He also owned livestock and fields: a cow, pigs and hens in the yard and nine acres of corn.

#### VILLAGE LAND

It is not only the buildings but also the shape of the village which gives it its character. Its shape is often an indication of how it grew. In the lowlands most villages fall into one of two groups: those that are compact and those that are scattered. Compact villages are usually the earlier settlements for which people took advantage of such natural sites as river valleys. Most of the farms lie within the village. The few outlying farms date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when, after enclosure,<sup>1</sup> the new owners of consolidated land moved out of the village to their property. The architecture, and sometimes such names as Waterloo Farm or Botany Bay, help to date these farms. Scattered villages are often later settlements situated on higher ground. They are usually larger than the compact ones and often contain two or three hamlets or perhaps one settlement and several Ends or Greens. The scattered farmhouses in this type of village date from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries which is evidence that the land was enclosed early. In heavily

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

wooded places like the Weald the land which was gradually cleared may never have been held in common but may have been made into compact holdings from the start. The roads here are usually twisty because they were originally made to go round small blocks of fields instead of round large open fields.

There are various kinds of maps in which we can study the layout of the village fields: Enclosure maps, Tithe maps and Estate maps. For instance in a Tithing map of 1797 for Studham, Bedfordshire,<sup>1</sup> we can see two open fields still divided into strips. One field was fallow but the other, Empey field, was under cultivation. This field of forty-five and a quarter acres was divided into thirty-five strips which were distributed among seven people: one owner farmed his own strips, the others had tenants and one tenant farmed for two owners. Nine of the strips were sown with barley, ten with wheat, ten with turnips, four were fallow and two were noted as 'common arable'. The strips with the same crop were not grouped together and there would not have been any hedges dividing one crop from another. The land division shown on this map is an example of the kind of confusion which by the eighteenth century must have made many villages decide to enclose their common fields. Studham was not enclosed until 1845 and then only in part, but during the nineteenth century a good deal of the land was bought up by a neighbouring large estate. Before then the fields on the south side of the parish must have presented a very different picture from what they do now. Instead of neat fields each surrounded by a hedge to keep out cattle there were two enormous fields containing a patchwork of crops each belonging to different owners and being farmed by different tenants. In some modern fields the ridge and furrow of the old open fields can sometimes be seen especially in the evening when the shadows are long. The ridges mark where the plough landed up the soil, and the furrows between them were, until the nineteenth century, the only means of drainage. The ridge and furrow of the old open field cuts across modern hedges. This is shown in *Essays in Leicestershire History* by W. G. Hoskins, in which there is an air photograph of the ridges and furrows of Old Mucklow field near Wigston Magna which was enclosed in 1766.

<sup>1</sup> In the Bedford Record Office.

Another way of finding out what the fields round the village used to look like is by making a study of the field names. The meanings of some are quite straightforward; those that are obscure can be looked up in the publication of the Place Name Society for the relevant county. Sometimes the names are given in old maps, but very often, except where the name has got distorted out of all recognition, it is not necessary to refer to maps; the farmers of to-day probably call the fields by the same names as their ancestors did a hundred or two hundred years ago. If we take again the fields round Studham, including those which once formed part of the open fields, we find that we can classify them. There are those names which probably refer to some past owner of the field: for instance Priest's Close and Glebe Field which used to belong to the church and No Man's Field on the boundary with Whipsnade which was probably disputed between the two parishes. A number of fields have names which indicate how they were used: for instance cherry orchard, horse pasture, hog's close, corn fields, hayden field, rickyard meadow. The name 'Lamsey field' refers to the practice of allowing all stock to graze on the stubble after Lammas<sup>1</sup> when the crop had been lifted. 'Chalk field' and 'dell field' refer to the practice of chalking the fields to lighten the heavy clay soil. In many of the fields in this and other parishes the ploughs still have to go round the deep pits where the chalk was dug; in others there is just a dip in the ground. These chalk pits sometimes account for the impenetrable thickets of small trees and undergrowth which are found locally in the middle of a field. Usually the remains of the pit, occasionally full of water, is still visible and round it has grown, untended, a useless jungle of hazels, cherries and hornbeams. Some names indicate the size and shape of fields which have usually remained unaltered: bent meadow, long field, crooked six acre, but more interesting names are those which describe the site. 'Soller ponds' tells us where sallow or willow used to grow, 'Stotmer' shows where there was hornbeam or hazel undergrowth, beech acre, ashen pasture and pond close speak for themselves. Coney hill and 'clapper's wood meadow' refer to the rabbits which, until the outbreak of myxomatosis in 1954, infested the hillside where these fields are. Great mill

<sup>1</sup> Lammas was the 1st August.

post and little mill post mark the site where a windmill, mentioned in a local will of 1604, once stood. There are two barn fields which no longer have barns. Cut-throat field perhaps served to remind people of some murder that took place there. It is noticeable that many of the names refer to woods which have long since disappeared. Such names as ley, grove and wood occur often and indicate that at some time the country was very much more wooded than it is now. Some of this woodland was probably common waste where pigs could be fed and fire-wood gathered. There was also much more open common land where the villagers could graze their stock. A number of field names have the suffix 'croft' which indicates an enclosure within a stretch of open field.

Now that we have some idea of what to look for in the buildings and the layout of a village, we must try to find out what the people who lived in the houses and worked in the fields were like and what sort of tools they used.

#### VILLAGE PEOPLE

The parish registers are a useful guide to the kind of people who lived in the village. After 1812 when the parishes had to have special printed books for recording the marriages, births and deaths of their people, we find that the profession of an infant's father, of a dead person, of a father of a fiancée and of a fiancé had to be given. In earlier registers it is given only here and there. In the marriage registers, where signatures are required, we can find a number of illiterate people who only make their mark. In the baptism registers, where the name of the father has to be given, we find a number of illegitimate births: for instance in the baptisms of Studham 1875 to 1890 there are nine illegitimate births including several from the same woman and one from a woman who later married.

The nineteenth-century registers are interesting because they give village occupations some of which have since died out. Every village then had its carpenter and at Studham it is possible to trace through three generations a family of carpenters called Austin who have since taken up other trades. There was one carpenter in the first generation and two first cousins who were carpenters in each of the two following generations. This could

be paralleled in many villages and in some places occupations go back much further. When making out family trees like this we get a very good idea of the enormous size of families : eight or nine children were common but it was rare for them all to survive.

In some places we find in one of the account books or registers an assessment of the village. The Churchwardens' Accounts of Offley in Hertfordshire<sup>1</sup> give in 1821 a total of one hundred and sixty-five families living in one hundred and forty-seven houses : one hundred and forty-three families were employed in agriculture, twenty in trade and two in neither of these categories. This kind of assessment helps to give an idea of the balance of occupations in a village.

The marriage registers of Whipsnade and Studham 1839 to 1914<sup>2</sup> mention a wide variety of occupations many of which are not now represented in the village. The most numerous class is farm labourer with shepherd entered separately. Craftsmen include carpenter, blacksmith, wheelwright, harness maker, tailor, baker, butcher, lace maker, bonnet sewer, hat blocker and a number of straw plaiters. People working for the big houses include domestic servants, governess, game keeper, coachman, ostler, baillif, gardener, groom. Finally there are one or two professional people and strangers : a schoolmaster whose father was a plasterer, the clergyman, a porter from the General Post Office, London, and a postman from Durham.

If we want to know more about these people's work we should go to the local museum which, for Studham, is at Luton. Here we can find not only the kitchen utensils described earlier but also the tools of craftsmen and farm labourers. Straw-plaiting and lace-making were local industries in the villages round Luton a hundred years ago and these crafts are particularly well displayed in the museum. We can see the tools of the straw plaiter : a splitter to split the straw to make a fine plait and a plait mill to flatten out the plait. Also displayed are the numerous kinds of plait made with different numbers of straws by the women who would sit at their cottage doors and even by shepherds who wanted to earn a little extra money as they watched their flocks.

<sup>1</sup> In the Parish Chest at Offley.

<sup>2</sup> In the Parish Chest at Studham.

We can see the straw bonnets that the bonnet sewer stitched by hand in her home and the hat-blocking machinery that hat blockers kept in their kitchens. Lace-making is represented in the museum by a life-size model of a lace maker sitting in her Victorian parlour. She has her lace pillow on a stand in front of her with pins stuck in to mark the pattern on the parchment and carved and coloured bobbins to differentiate each thread. On the floor in a basket are other parchment patterns, more pins, scissors and thread. Beside her is a candle stool to give her light on dark evenings. The candle in the middle of the stool is surrounded by a number of glass bowls which concentrate the light into beams so that several lace makers at once could have shared the one candle with her.

In other museums there are workshops of other craftsmen and women: at York there is a weaver's cottage containing a hand loom; at Blaise Castle, Bristol, there is a cooper's workshop, and at the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagan's near Cardiff we can see a real basket-maker at work and a real wood turner making wooden spoons and bowls. Most local museums, even where they have not reconstructed actual workshops, have displays of local crafts: a particularly interesting one is at Bishop Hooper's House, Gloucester where the Severn Fishery collections show traps, nets and spears (now illegal) for catching eels, salmon, lamprey, trout, pike and other river fish.

Luton Museum has a number of tools and objects made by local blacksmiths, carpenters and wheelwrights. It is still possible in a few villages to visit a blacksmith or carpenter and watch him at work but there are very few wheelwrights left as the carts and wagons that they made have to some extent been superseded by tractor-drawn vehicles. There is a model in the museum of a cart made by a wheelwright from a nearby village and it shows how each part was made with a special sort of wood. Near the model are the wheelwright's tools: his adze for hollowing out the felloes or wooden parts of the wheel's circumference, his draw shave for shaping the spokes and, for measuring the length of the rim, his traveller—a wheel much like those used nowadays for measuring distances on maps.

Most local museums have some agricultural implements. (See plate 7). It is usually possible, with the aid of these and of cata-

logues of such folk museums as Alton, Gloucester, York and the new Museum of English Rural Life at Reading, to build up a picture of the farming year before the introduction of large-scale machinery. The year started at Michaelmas which was the time, then as now, when farms changed hands. October was the month in which winter wheat was sown. This was broadcast until well on into the nineteenth century when seed drills came into general use. Some seed was sown by hand from a seed lip hanging from the waist ; other seed was sown from a fiddle drill, a container with a bow which was drawn to and fro to cause the seed to drop out evenly. Beans were sown one by one in holes made by means of a dibber. After sowing, the seed was harrowed in ; a harrow, because it is light, is one of the few machines one still sees being drawn by horses. Also during October the first ploughing for the spring corn was done. A number of different kinds of single furrow plough were used and most of them were made entirely of wood. In parts of Sussex ox ploughs were used until the beginning of the twentieth century and in Hove museum there is an ox yoke and a set of ox bells from Exceat farm near Eastbourne ; other local museums quite frequently have ox shoes displayed. Where there were enclosures hedging and ditching was done in October ; to-day we can still see the hedger at work in his leather apron and gloves. October was also a busy month for the stockman : the balance of grass-fed cattle and sheep were sold off and the remaining sheep were folded on to the stubble.

By the end of the eighteenth century the scientific cultivation of turnips and clover allowed more stock to be kept over the winter but until then most of them had had to be sold or slaughtered in the autumn. In the months of November and December little could be done in the fields except hedging and ditching but in the barns threshing was done throughout the winter. Corn was threshed by hand with a flail and winnowed in a sieve until the use of mechanical threshers and winnowers spread in the nineteenth century. In January the land for spring crops and for grass would have a second ploughing and in February and March the seed would be sown. In these months the shepherd had a busy time with lambs. By May milk from the cows, and in early days from the ewes as well, was in sufficient production



for there to be plenty of work for the dairymaid in making butter and cheese. In the fields there was weeding and rolling to be done and the land had to be prepared for turnip sowing in June. June was also the month for hay-making ; rows of men with scythes moved out across the field and laid the grass in swaths which had to be ' tedded ' and turned with a fork to hasten their drying. Sheep washing and shearing was also done in June. In July hay-making and weeding continued and by now all the livestock had plenty of green food. Fallow ploughing in preparation for the autumn sowing went on. In August and September the harvest came as the climax of the farmer's year. Crops were reaped by hand with a sickle until the nineteenth century when reapers came into general use ; women bound the sheaves with straw tied in knots which varied from one locality to another. The work was heavy so everybody turned out to assist and the farmers encouraged their workers with ale and cider brought out to the fields in special little barrels called harvest barrels. The corn was dried in stooks and then stacked. The thatcher thatched the stack to keep it dry until the time came for it to be threshed. It used to be the custom in some places to decorate the stack with corn ' dollies ' made from the last stalks to be harvested.

In every village there are people who remember some aspect of the old order. At Studham, Bedfordshire there was somebody who remembered when men went round offering their services in the winter to thresh with flails, and in another village someone will be found who can make a corn dolly or a straw plait. It is always worth seeking out these people but they are fast dying out. A few villagers have realized that the old hand-crafts should not be forgotten and here and there exists a village museum which is trying to preserve the memory of them. Such a one is at Ashwell, Hertfordshire. It was started twenty or more years ago by two boys who collected old objects they found and kept them in the wash-house at home. They were so keen about it that people gave them obsolete tools, and kitchen utensils belonging to their grandparents, so that the museum grew and soon became too big for the wash house.

A rich man who had been born in Ashwell realized that the boys were making a valuable collection, and he supplied enough

money for an old house to be bought for the exhibits. This house was restored and it now contains the collection of by-gones. The boys are grown up but one of them continues to add to the museum and to keep the labels up to date. Ashwell was primarily an agricultural village so the exhibits include specimens of old farming implements but there are also the tools of the blacksmith and the carpenter who worked with the farmer and of the builder, tiler, basket maker and rope maker. The village was in the area where a very unusual industry had developed: coprolites or the fossilized dung of extinct reptiles were dug out of the soil to be used for fertilizer. An interesting relic of this local industry exhibited in the museum is a pair of creeping irons which used to be tied on to the boots of the diggers to enable them to walk up and down the slippery poles over the pits where the coprolites were dug.

Farm labourers and craftsmen provided the bulk of the population in a village but we must not forget that there were always a few people from the professional and land-owning classes. Some of these we shall meet when we come to consider the organization of the village but one man, the schoolmaster, might be mentioned here. The eighteenth-century schoolmaster is well described by Goldsmith in *The Deserted Village*.

‘ A man severe he was, and stern to view ;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew ;  
Well had the boding tremblers learn’d to trace  
The day’s disasters in his morning face.

Yet he was kind ; or if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault.’

Goldsmith makes him a useful man to have in the village because not only could he write and calculate but

‘ Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,  
And e’en the story ran that he could gauge.’

There was, in fact, no knowing what he could not do.

#### VILLAGE ORGANIZATION

The affairs of the village were administered by the Parish Vestry and its officers. The Vestry was established at least as

early as the fourteenth century for ecclesiastical affairs, and from the sixteenth century, when the manorial and hundred courts were decaying, it began to take over civil duties as well. It originally included all the inhabitants of the parish but in some places the Vestry was 'select'; that is to say it consisted only of a group of inhabitants. By gradual stages provision of arms, maintenance of the local highway, dealing with the local poor and the making of by-laws, came under the auspices of the Vestry. It assessed, levied and controlled the expenditure of the church rate, the poor rate and the highway rate, and had a share in the appointment of Churchwardens, Constables, Waywardens and Overseers of the Poor.

The minute books and the account books of the Vestry and of the parish officers give most interesting details of the way in which village life was organized and it is worth studying some of them in detail.

The Churchwardens played a large part in village life. They were unpaid and there were usually two of them: one appointed by the vicar and one elected by the people each year. Their duties were to go to the Archdeacon's Court twice a year to report on the running of the church, to maintain the church building and furnishings and sometimes to perform various civilian duties such as paying, under an Elizabethan Act, for the destruction of vermin. They were able to charge a rate on the possessions of the inhabitants of the parish, usually threepence or sixpence but sometime ninepence or a shilling in the pound and they had to keep an account to show how the money was spent. Medieval account books are rare but later ones are fairly common; those of Studham, Bedfordshire,<sup>1</sup> for instance, date from 1750.

It is interesting to see what kind of people became churchwardens and who audited the accounts. If we take the years 1750-1850 at Studham we find that the first two churchwardens, one of whom was a 'gent', held office for twenty years and that the auditors always included at least one 'gent'. From 1780 onwards the vicar appeared, at first intermittently and then regularly, as an auditor. After 1819, when there was an Act requiring a chairman and signed minutes, the vicar not only took

<sup>1</sup> In the Parish Chest at Studham.

the chair but copied all the accounts as well, and payments to someone else for writing ceased. After about 1770 the churchwardens went in family pairs for several decades: Ephraim and then Thomas Crawley, John Cooke followed by William Cooke and there were others. There was one illiterate churchwarden who could only make his mark.

The accounts show each year a record of the wardens going about their business on behalf of the village. There are the expenses twice a year for the journey to Luton, Dunstable or Bedford to attend the Archdeacon's Court. There are the expenses at the Vestry Meeting when the new wardens were elected and the accounts were audited. These meetings were held at the Bell Inn which still stands in the village, and the vestry members felt, as they were not paid for their work, that they were entitled to stand themselves a drink at the expense of the parish. A typical entry is 'paid for beer at the making of the account three-shillings' in 1763. Other annual expenses included payments for forms of prayer for occasions such as the death of George II, buying communion bread and wine, washing the surplice usually four times a year, bell ringing on November 5th and on special occasions such as the King's proclamation in 1761. Most of the accounts, however, were taken up with repairing the church. There were constant payments to the carpenter, blacksmith, bricklayer and glazier and for beer for the various workmen. In 1774 the church was rough casted for £29 7s. In 1825 extensive repairs were necessary and money had to be borrowed as not enough could be raised by the sale of the old lead<sup>1</sup> from the roof, disused timber and by the rate. Meanwhile the furnishings of the church were taken care of. In 1765 a new Bible and Prayer Book were bought and nine years later two dozen new hassocks. In 1760 eleven-and-a-half yards of Holland cloth were bought for the surplice which apparently lasted until 1822 when the next entry for cloth for the surplice is made.

The only entries for payments for the destruction of vermin at Studham were for sparrows of which an immense number seem to have been killed. Threepence was paid per dozen and

<sup>1</sup> Old lead often contained silver and in some cases a whole new roof could be bought from the proceeds of selling the silver recovered by refining.

at the end of 1819 payment was made for twenty-three dozen killed during the year. An analysis of Bedfordshire vermin payments published by Luton Museum shows that in other parishes the destruction was mainly concerned with carnivorous mammals such as fox, otter, pine marten, pole cat, stoat, weasel and with harmless creatures such as moles and hedgehogs. The churchwardens evidently aided the game-keepers in exterminating mammals which might attack game. At Eaton Socon as many as sixteen pine martens are accounted for, which is interesting as they are now locally extinct. The general destruction of carnivores has probably contributed to the increase of small rodents, such as mice and voles, which are a pest to the farmer and which were formerly kept down by stoats, weasels, and foxes. It is possible also that the present increase of grey squirrels might never have occurred if pine martens had not been exterminated by persecution.

The Overseers of the Poor were important parochial officers from 1601 until 1834 when their duties were taken over by Boards of Guardians responsible for parishes grouped under Unions. They were unpaid officials chosen by the Vestry and appointed annually by the Justices of the Peace.

There are no accounts of the Overseers of the Poor for Studham but they are fairly common for other places and some extracts from the accounts of Anstey, Hertfordshire, 1811-1821<sup>1</sup> may be taken as an example. The Overseers were responsible for looking after the poor in the workhouse and for giving relief to the poor outside the workhouse. There were a number of payments for clothes for the paupers in the workhouse: a shirt for Sam King, a sheet for Ann Perry, breeches for James Skiggs. Payments were made for coal and wood to heat the workhouse. The paupers had to be occupied and calico was bought for Elizabeth Cotton to sew. When the paupers were ill the doctor was paid to come; when they died a coffin was bought for the body and payments were made for the bell to be tolled at the funeral.

At Anstey the payments indicate that a good deal of responsibility was taken for the paupers. George Crabbe in *The Village* draws a picture of a workhouse in an eighteenth century parish

<sup>1</sup> In the Hertfordshire Record Office.

which makes one wonder what in practice these payments meant. He describes the tumbledown and stinking house and the miserable people who are forced to live there, orphans, widows, forsaken wives, the blind, the lame, the mad. He then goes on to tell of the sufferings of the sick pauper to whom the parish sent a quack doctor.

The doctor :

‘Wears contempt upon his sapient sneer ;  
In haste he seeks the bed where Misery lies,  
Impatience mark’d in his averted eyes ;  
And, some habitual queries hurried o’er,  
Without reply, he rushes on the door :  
His drooping patient, long inured to pain,  
And long unheeded, knows remonstrance vain ;  
He ceases now the feeble help to crave  
Of man ; and silent sinks into the grave.’

Even a pauper cannot die without a priest but once again the agent sent to minister to his needs is not worthy of his calling. A jovial hunting parson hurries in and out, intent only to get back to his hounds and his horses. When the pauper finally died and was carried in his bier up the hill to the church,

‘The busy priest, detain’d by weightier care,  
Defers his duty till the day of prayer ;  
And waiting long the crowd retire, distress’d  
To think a poor man’s bones should lie unblest.’

If Crabbe is right then we cannot always believe that the payments to the doctor brought solace to the paupers nor that even the priest comforted them. However, all priests were not as bad as Crabbe’s priest. We know from the eighteenth-century diary of Parson Woodforde that, though he spent much time entertaining his friends, he was a kindly man who made small gifts to the poor and gave them a dinner at Christmas. Goldsmith in *The Deserted Village* described the ideal parson at whose house beggars, vagrants and spendthrifts could find sanctuary.

Another part of the work of the Overseers which has left records is that of the examination of paupers. They presented paupers to be examined in front of a Justice to see if they belonged

to the parish where they were claiming aid or if they could be sent somewhere else to be supported. Settlement orders are very common : one for Anstey in 1781<sup>1</sup> shows that there was a couple with a child inhabiting Anstey without legal settlement and the Justice, after examination, ordered them to Wendon, Anstey being charged with the conveyance.

A pregnant woman whose child was likely to be born a bastard chargeable to the parish was a great liability in the eighteenth century : the law enabled her to charge a man with being the father and the man had either to marry her or to indemnify the parish. Sometimes the papers of the examination in front of the Justice survive : in 1784 there is one for Anstey<sup>1</sup> in which a pregnant woman charges John Kinglass with having gotten a child by her, and makes her mark. Parson Woodforde noted in his diary in 1787 'married one Robert Astick and Elizabeth Howlett by license . . . the man being in custody, the woman being with child by him. The man was a long time before he could be prevailed upon to marry her when in the churchyard ; and at the altar behaved very unbecoming. It is very disagreeable to me to marry such persons.'

The Overseers had not only to provide work for the adults in the workhouse but also to take steps to apprentice pauper children. Apprentice indentures are often found in the parish chest. At Anstey in 1749<sup>1</sup> a pauper boy was apprenticed to learn 'the art or way of a labourer in husbandry' and four years later another was apprenticed to learn 'the art or trade of a glover'. Dickens in *Oliver Twist* gave a vivid description of the pompous Beadle or parish Constable taking Oliver to be apprenticed to an undertaker who wanted a small pathetic-looking boy to act as a mute. Charles Kingsley in *The Water Babies* described the unhappy lot of pauper children apprenticed to chimney sweeps.

The Constable was another important voluntary parish official. His office went back even further than the Middle Ages to Anglo-Saxon England. He was originally chosen by the Manor Court but by the sixteenth century was appointed each year by the Justices on the nomination of the Vestry. He was a parochial officer until 1856 when he became a paid member of the County Police Force. His primary duty was to take care of the arrange-

<sup>1</sup> In the Hertfordshire Record Office.

ments for keeping watch and ward. He was in charge of the parish armour and had to organize the muster of men which was the contribution of the parish to the militia. The Constable's, Churchwardens' and Overseers' accounts are sometimes all in one book, as they are for instance for Northfield, a place which was once a village but which is now part of the suburbs of Birmingham. Here in 1606 there were payments for a double cannon, for repairing muskets and pikes, for buying bullets and powder, for looking after arms and for repairing the archery butts. In 1625 there are payments of wages for trained soldiers and in 1676 Thomas Brindyle was given the meagre compensation of sixpence after having had his arm shot off while training.

During the Civil War the Constable's work was made more arduous, and at Upton, Nottinghamshire<sup>1</sup> there is an interesting series of accounts showing the impact of the war on a small village near Newark which was one of the centres of the struggle between Cavaliers and Roundheads. Soldiers going to and from the battle front passed through the village, often with their families, and the Constable frequently gave them a little money. At the siege of Newark which began in 1643, the militia men from Upton spent one pound and afterwards there were continual payments in kind to the Royalist garrison: pease, hay and rye were sent and three feather beds. The Constable also had to provide billets for soldiers passing through. 'For lodging a captain and two men and four horses. His troops lay in our town and nobody would lodge him. I having all my beds taken up before was fain to lodge him in my bed, one shilling.' When the Roundheads occupied the village to increase the pressure on Newark, payments had also to be made to the Parliamentary army. But at the same time the half-starved Royalist garrison made raids on the surrounding country for food. In 1645 a watch was being kept on the church steeple. 'For ale and tobacco for the watch on the church steeple eightpence'. In November 1645 the Scots came south to join in the assault on Newark and, as they lived off the land until Parliament voted them a grant, their assessment on the village was very heavy. The Upton Constable noted that he paid £69 6s. 3d. in thirteen

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from Constable's accounts published in *Rude Forefathers*, see bibliography.



weeks. Finally in 1646 the King came to terms with the Scots and was forced to order the Newark garrison to capitulate. After that there was a constant stream of wounded soldiers through the village, to each of whom the Constable gave a few pence.

As we have seen above the Constable had considerable poor-law duties. He had to take paupers to be settled in other parishes and he often made payments to licensed beggars who were passing through the parish. Another of his duties was to make presentments at Quarter Sessions of Popish Recusants or Catholics who refused to go to Church of England services. At Northfield in 1625 the Constable notes that 'the 9th of May I was away all day from mine own house about the popish business straining for the subsidy and searching for recusants which day it cost me . . . ' and the amount is indcipherable.

The Constable was able to arrest a wrong-doer and keep him in the stocks or the roundhouse until it was possible to bring him before a magistrate. In many villages the stocks where a man was held by his feet are still visible and in some places, such as Ashwell, Hertfordshire, the roundhouse is still to be seen. At Northfield in 1713 there is a payment for 'the tenders' for watching all night over someone in custody. At Essendon, Hertfordshire, a pair of handcuffs and a lock were bought in 1775 to make it easier to guard the wrong-doers. There are payments at Northfield for dealing in 1774 with Bess Bates. It is not recorded what she had done but it cost sixpence to go to the Justice with her, three shillings and sixpence to buy a whipping post, sixpence to pay someone to whip her and fourpence 'spent at whipping her'.

The Justices were an indispensable part of a parish government. Their origin is medieval but they came into prominence in the sixteenth century when the Tudors developed local government. They played a great part in local life as the assessors of wages and prices especially of bread. They dispensed summary justice: it was to the Justice that the Constable presented his wrong-doers. They supervised the administration of the Poor Law; as we have seen they examined vagrants and cases of settlement, and it was to them that the Waywarden and the Constable were responsible. Their powers were in fact consider-

able and their irresponsible misuse of them was satirized in the eighteenth century by Fielding, Smollett and others. In *Joseph Andrews* Fielding describes a Justice both drunk and ignorant who abused the prisoners before hearing what had happened. On the whole however, the Justices were substantial squires, rich enough to be above corruption and anxious to stand well with their neighbours.

We have seen that there are a number of different kinds of sources to use in the construction of a picture of village life in the past. It is not enough to study the ages of the surviving buildings; this is only a beginning to the much fuller study of the life of the people. The objects used in the buildings have to be sought in museums; the kind of people who lived there have to be traced in the local records. Our aim should always be to try to get as close as possible to the actual people whose lives we are trying to re-create. Sometimes the nearest we can get is a general description in some poem or novel. Sometimes we can find the inventory of the belongings of a person who actually lived there. Sometimes we can trace a family of local craftsmen whose names appear in the registers and perhaps in the account books and whose tools are in the museum. What we find out depends on our exploration of local sources and on our application of general material to our locality.

### SOME BUILDINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN A VILLAGE

*Castle or Great House*: See Chapter 3: inn with family name, family foundations of almshouse or school.

*Church*: See Chapter 4: chapels and family memorials: tithe barn. Medieval priest's house or later rectory, lychgate, tombstones of villagers.

*Manor or other large house*: sixteenth or seventeenth century, timber framed, gabled, mullioned windows; eighteenth century, brick or stone, hipped roof, pillared portico.

*Farmhouses*: architecture as above: dairy, barn, oast house, pigeon house.

*Cottages and shops of craftsmen and labourers*: forge of blacksmith, saw pit of carpenter, ropewalk of ropemaker.

Mill and hammer pond, old millstones sometimes used for paving. Inn, tavern, alehouse.

Market cross or market hall.  
 Almshouse, school, workhouse.  
 Lock-up, stocks, pillory, whipping-post.  
 Well, pond, green.

## SOME USEFUL SOURCES TO BE FOUND IN THE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE

Engravings or etchings of important buildings such as church or manor. (Occasionally in Museum or Public Library).  
 Terrier of church or manor: exact description of property.  
 Inventory of church possessions, especially at Reformation but many later ones.  
 Inventory of landowner or farmer.  
 Diaries and letters of local people, plans of local houses.  
*Maps*: Enclosure map, Tithe map, Estate map.  
*Parish Records*: Vestry minutes, Churchwardens' accounts, Constable's accounts, Overseer of highway's accounts, Poor Law records including overseer's accounts, orders of settlement, inventories of paupers, examination of vagrants, apprentice indentures.

## SOME BYGONES TO LOOK FOR IN MUSEUMS

### HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT

*Cooking utensils*: Chimney crane or swinging horizontal bar fixed to the fireplace and supporting adjustable hanger.  
 Spit for roasting meat: one prong, two prong, basket or cradle, some mechanically operated by dog, or draught, or clock.  
 Jack for suspending joint vertically in front of smaller fire, often had screen or hastener.  
 Lazyback, suspended on a hanger; by pressing down handle kettle automatically tipped forward.  
 Earthenware pan for kneading bread, hutch for storing flour, oven peel or long-handled spade for removing bread from oven, pastry moulds.  
 Fire dogs to support logs, iron fire back to protect brick chimney; adjustable toaster, egg timer, salt box, spice box, spice mill, sugar nippers.  
 Wooden tubs and vats for salting meat, wooden pestle and mortar for pounding meat for mince or paste.  
 Copper for cooking and wine-making as well as for washing.  
 Spinning wheel, yarn winder, hand loom, shuttle, bobbins.  
*Lighting*: rushlight holder, candlestick, horn lantern, oil lamp, oil lantern, snuffer, extinguisher.

*Washing*: Mangle, box iron, goffering iron, wooden wash tub, carved mangling boards and washing dollies.

*Tableware*: Wooden and pewter plates, dishes and bowls, horn mugs and spoon, pewter mugs and tankards, blue and white china.

*Furniture*: dresser, settle, stick-back chairs, chests, four-poster bed, corner cupboard, hutch cupboard, table, benches.

*Dairy*: Wooden churn, scales, cheese press, butter moulds, butter pats, markers, rollers, yoke for buckets, milking stool, measures, cheese vat, tin skimmers.

*Brewing*: Casks, mash tub, mash stick, keeler (wooden tub), wilch (wicker, bottle-like object acting as a strainer) skimmers and strainers, ale stool on which cask rested, beer muller for warming beer.

*Farming*: Wooden plough, flail, hummeler for threshing barley, sickle, scythe with grease horn and bag of sand for sharpening it, dibber for sowing beans, fiddle drill and seedlip for sowing broadcast, bird scarer, ox yoke and ox shoes, wagons and carts, drench horn for dosing cattle, fleam and mallet for bleeding horses, turnip peck and chopper, corn dolly, harvest barrel, harrow, drill, chaff cutter, cultivator, winnowing machine.

Shepherd's crook, shears, sheep bells, branding iron, hurdles. Hedger's bill-hook, slasher, draining scoop, weedgrubber, thistle spud.

## CRAFTSMEN

*Blacksmith*: Tools included hammer, anvil, tongs; he made trivets, fire irons, window casements, gates, iron tires for wagons, and mended agricultural machinery.

*Shoeing smith*: Made horse shoes and doctored horses; tools included gag, fleam, tooth extractor.

*Wheelwright*: Tools included traveller or wheel for measuring rim, adze, jack, spokeshave; he made carts, wagons and ladders.

*Cooper in village often combined with wheelwright*: Tools included short handled curved adze, side axe; he made churns, milk pails, wash tubs, wooden bowls, butter tubs, cheese vats, salting tubs, casks for beer and cider.

*Rope maker*: Raw material was hemp, flax or jute; made bell ropes, sash cord, fishing line, etc.

*Cobbler made as well as mended boots and shoes*: Tools included last or model of foot, knives, welt pricker, pattern awls, two-sided flat-faced hammer.

*Saddler*: Tools included—awl or spiked wheel for marking stitches, needles, waxed thread, wooden clamp or saddle horse, saddle tree; he made and mended saddles, harness, collars, straps, belts.

*Hurdle maker*: Tools included short-handled axe, hammer, bill hook, draw knife; he made hurdles mainly out of ash; seven ledges for pigs, six ledges for sheep.

*Basket maker*: Raw material was osier or in some places rushes; tools included beating iron, bodkin, shears, knife, blocks for squared work.

*Craftsmen in building*: Included mason, bricklayer, carpenter, plasterer, tiler, thatcher (who also thatched ricks).

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE TOWN

For the study of towns there is a variety of contemporary material to consult. Most towns have some old buildings, museum specimens, newspapers, directories and guide books. In using them for the purpose either of piecing together the story of the development of a town or of creating a picture of a town at a certain period in its history, there are several general points to bear in mind.

The site of a town is always worth considering as it may have had an effect on its history. Rye (Sussex), situated on a hill and surrounded on three sides by water was in an admirable defensive position and was a flourishing port until the sea receded and rendered the river unnavigable except for the smallest craft. By this time its defensive site was a restriction on building development rather than an advantage, so Rye has always remained a small town. The industrial development of towns was sometimes directly due to their geographical positions. Sheffield had millstone grit for knife grinding, the cotton towns of Lancashire were near coalfields; and the iron industry developed in the eighteenth century in south Yorkshire and Derbyshire because there was not only iron ore but also wood for charcoal smelting when elsewhere it had been exhausted.

A good deal can be found out about the growth of towns by studying the modern distribution of buildings of different dates in conjunction with modern town plans and street names. Where possible they should be compared with older town plans, views and paintings, but even without these much can be done.

First of all we can usually find on a town plan the nucleus of streets crossings north to south and east to west and possibly round those the line of the town wall sometimes preserved in street names. The number and size of the medieval churches and the street names marking sites of monastery, priory or castle will give an idea of the importance of the town in the Middle

Ages. The position of a large monastic or secular estate sometimes prevented a town from expanding. The original town of Bristol was on a promontory with a river on two sides; it could not expand to the north because of monastic estates so it developed south across the river where the great fourteenth-century church of St. Mary Redcliffe still testifies to the success of the expansion. Domestic buildings of medieval or even sixteenth- and seventeenth-century date are rare in most towns but occasionally they can be found by looking at the backs of houses. Sometimes a timber-framed or gabled house has been fronted in the eighteenth century with a Georgian façade to make the street look more symmetrical. Sometimes also an old house can be found above a modern shop front.

The medieval nucleus of a town, even when the houses have gone and only the plan remains, is usually rather a huddle with alleys leading off from the High Street. In the eighteenth century, when many towns expanded because of better road-connections between them, faster coaches and, in some places, the rise of industry, the tendency was to build wide streets. Houses were often grouped into harmonious squares and crescents and can easily be recognized by their classical architecture. On the plan they can be detected by street names and inn names recalling battles or national heroes of the time.

The expansion in the nineteenth century which came as a result of canal and railway communications and the increased development of industry, very often led to the gardens of the large houses in the centre of the town being built over. Therefore you may find behind fine eighteenth century houses, red brick slum courtyards. It also resulted in an enormous expansion in the suburbs. This can be followed, as in the eighteenth century, by the architecture of the houses, the dates of the foundations of the churches and chapels (in Kelly's Directory) and the names of the streets and inns. There was often considerable development round the railway station where the new Railway Hotel took away the custom from the eighteenth-century coaching inns on the main roads.

With some idea of the growth of the town it is possible to start collecting information on the most interesting periods in its history. The topographical writers can be consulted for



descriptions of the town: Leland for the sixteenth, Fiennes for the seventeenth, Defoe for the eighteenth and Cobbett for the early nineteenth centuries. The public library and the museum can be searched for the topographical views and paintings that were probably made in the early nineteenth century before most of the old buildings were swept away, and for early guide-books, newspapers and trade directories which usually date from the late eighteenth century. Guide-books contain descriptions of the antiquities of the town, its amenities and chief trades and a map. Local newspapers, some of which began in the eighteenth century, are often mainly concerned with reports of London news but usually they have local advertisements and accounts of public meetings as well. Trade directories are mostly concerned with the details of the tradesmen in the town but sometimes they have a few general remarks on the state of the town also.

The town museum besides having pictures and plans may also have a few relevant specimens; for instance tools or machinery of the local trade, examples of crafts and manufactures or even reconstructed workshops of craftsmen.

It may seem that we are concentrating on the later developments of towns to the exclusion of the earlier growth. This is done deliberately, partly because there are so many books already on the antiquities of towns and partly because the later periods are a great deal more fruitful for the non-specialist. Few towns have many medieval buildings apart from the churches which we have already studied in Chapter 4, and even fewer have medieval museum specimens. The medieval records are all in Latin and even where they are translated are very difficult to follow. For later periods we can use descriptions and illustrations of town and people instead of having to interpret legal proceedings and constitutional documents, as we have to for the Middle Ages, in order to find out how people lived.

Towns like York and Leicester have been occupied continuously as towns for many centuries and have altered considerably each in their own way, but they retain many features of their past. Both York and Leicester were tribal capitals taken over by the Romans and made into towns; they each have Roman buildings and Roman specimens in their museums and could be

studied as Roman towns in the way we saw in Chapter 2. Each also has considerable medieval remains. York, as the seat of the archbishopric, has more than Leicester, but even in Leicester there is enough material to make a study of the town in the Middle Ages. A medieval town was fortified with a wall and gates : at York we can still see them but at Leicester we can only find the line of them on the street plan and be reminded of their existence by various street names. The river Soar bounded Leicester on one side, the northern walls ran along what is now Sanvey Gate,<sup>1</sup> the eastern walls along Church Gate and the southern walls along Horsefair Street. Many medieval towns grew up round a castle : at York there is still a Norman mound with the remains of a medieval castle on top ; at Leicester the castle mound is still to be seen and behind the seventeenth century brick façade of the courthouse there is a fourteenth-century cellar. Medieval towns were remarkable for the number of religious buildings which grew up within them. York has a famous minster and a large number of medieval churches, a college for chantry priests, St. Anthony's Hall which belonged to a religious guild, and a ruined abbey. Leicester has several medieval churches, the site of the abbey and one or two street names commemorating the sites of other foundations : for instance Blackfriar's Lane, and Friar Lane where the Grey Friars were. York was a centre for the wool trade in the Middle Ages and though the medieval Guildhall was burnt in the last war there still exist the halls of the two great trading companies the Merchant Taylors and the Merchant Adventurers and some medieval houses. Leicester still has its medieval Guildhall but has lost its medieval houses.<sup>2</sup>

In this brief comparison between the main medieval features of these two towns we can see that, although the cathedral city of York has a great deal more to show, it is possible even in a manufacturing town such as Leicester, to get some idea of what it was like in the Middle Ages by looking at a modern street plan and by studying the street names.

<sup>1</sup> Gate from *gaet*, Anglo-Saxon for street and nothing to do with the modern word gate.

<sup>2</sup> For buildings and contemporary quotations for Leicester see Colin Ellis's *History in Leicester*.

Where town records have been translated and published,<sup>1</sup> as they have at Leicester, it is possible to get some idea of how a town was organized in the Middle Ages. The guild at Leicester, as in most other places, kept a monopoly of the trade—in this case wool—in the hands of a brotherhood. The brothers were exempted from the tolls payable by strangers, and safeguarded by regulations that strangers' wool might only be sold to guildsmen and that only guildsmen could sell retail. The wool packers and washers worked only for guildsmen, and the looms and dyes were kept exclusively for their use. Within the guild, standards were kept up by the guild court which enforced its rules by fines, banishment and forbidding the exercise of craft; members had to have their goods examined to see if they were of the correct standard and weight, and to lessen the chance of competition from outside they could only trade at certain times and places.

To provide a background for the medieval buildings of a town it is always worth looking in the museum for pottery, tiles, pewter and leather of the period, and it is also worth finding out if there is a topographical description which is relevant. Leland's description of Leicester about 1538 contains several references to medieval buildings which have since disappeared and gives an idea of the appearance of the town. 'The whole town of Leicester at this time is builded of timber . . . the walls of St. Mary's abbey be three quarters of a mile about. . . . The Grey Friars of Leicester stood at the end of the Hospital of Mr. Wigeston. . . . The castle standing near the west bridge is at this time a thing of small estimation. . . .' Leland goes on to say that there were no high walls left and that they were probably destroyed in Henry II's time. He describes the collegiate church of the Newarke, of which there is now only the much altered chantry house left, and mentions an almshouse within the College. He goes on to mention the Blackfriars on an island in the Soar, and several bridges, one with seven or eight arches of stone not unlike the medieval bridge at Aylestone just outside Leicester.

After the end of the Middle Ages the histories of York and Leicester cease to be parallel. The cloth industry, which had

<sup>1</sup> *Records of Leicester*. M. Bateson, 3 vols. Middle Ages to Seventeenth Century.

made York so prosperous in the Middle Ages, moved out of the town into the villages which were later to become the great manufacturing towns of Leeds, Huddersfield and Halifax. These places had the advantage of fast-flowing streams which could be harnessed to speed up the process of fulling, and so people moved out to them and York did not grow into a manufacturing town. It did not regain its great economic importance until the nineteenth century when the railways made it again the route centre it had been earlier. Leicester, on the other hand, began to develop into an industrial town after the introduction of the stocking frame knitter at the end of the seventeenth century. This first industry was established without power and for a long time production was not crowded into factories; men continued to work in their own homes, though with material and frames belonging to their employers. Leicester was therefore saved from slums but not from acres of mean cottages.

Defoe, writing in 1724, showed the difference between the two towns. He described York as a fine town with splendid old buildings but 'here is no trade except such as depends on the confluence of the gentry.' Leeds had taken the place of York economically and had a large cloth market which Defoe described in detail. At Leicester he said 'they have a considerable manufacture carry'd on here and in several market towns round for the weaving of stockings by frames, and one would scarce think it possible that so small an article of trade could employ such multitudes of people as it does.' Cobbett, writing about 1830, described the miserable state of the stocking-frame workers a century later. 'Look at those hovels, made of mud and straw, bits of glass, or of old cast windows, without frames or hinges frequently, but merely stuck in the mud wall. Enter then and look at the bits of chairs or stools, the wretched boards tacked together to serve as a table; the floor of pebble, broken brick or the bare ground; look at the thing called a bed; and survey the rags on the backs of the wretched inhabitants.'

The stocking-frame workers rioted in 1773 and 1787 and attempted to destroy machinery which they thought would deprive them of their scanty earnings. In 1832 the *Leicester Chronicle*<sup>1</sup> printed an account of the distress of the frame-work

<sup>1</sup> British Museum Newspaper Library.

knitters who met at the King's Arms to petition Parliament. Their wages were only seven shillings a week. Many had to work sixteen hours a day and then to ask for parochial relief. Owing to temporary depressions they had to take work at any price and often it was degrading employment in the workhouse. There were no riots in 1832 but ten years later serious Chartist riots broke out. Fortunately in 1849 the invention of the hand-riveted, as opposed to the hand-sewn, boot gave the artisans an alternative employment in times of depression and absorbed the men while the new hosiery factories were employing more and more women. Elastic-sided boots came into fashion just at this time and, as Leicester already made elastic webbing as a branch of the hosiery industry, it was able to develop this trade.

Most towns have a number of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century buildings. For instance, if in Leicester we search among the acres of mean red brick streets and the towering factory chimneys, we can find quite a number of earlier buildings. Eighteenth-century brickwork can be distinguished from that of a later period because the early bricks were made locally and were smaller. Before the mid-nineteenth century many Leicester houses were roofed with Swithland slates. These can be distinguished from later Welsh slates because they were hand cut and irregular in shape and also because they are graded in size increasing from the ridge to the eaves. Stucco houses usually date from the first half of the nineteenth century. High Cross Street contains a fine mid-eighteenth-century brick house with a pillared and pedimented doorway; and New Walk, which was laid out in 1785, contains a few stucco Regency houses with ornamental iron railings. The coaching inns are represented by the Bell Hotel, eighteenth-century factories by Donneythorpe and Company, Nonconformist chapels by the eighteenth-century Great Meeting House in Bond Street and the nineteenth-century 'Pork Pie' chapel in Belvoir Street, and Regency planned development by Crescent Cottages at the top of King's Street. In most towns similar buildings can be found. Leicester, like many other places, has an eighteenth-century house furnished in contemporary style and open to the public.

Some towns have good museum material to illustrate their past life. York is justly celebrated for its wonderful Castle Folk

Museum which includes a reconstructed street of shops. We can go into the tallow dip factory and see the candles hanging over the great troughs of fat, or into the sweet shop and see rows of jars containing brightly coloured sweets and we can even smell the smell of home-made sweets because the museum staff have thought to put a stick of cinnamon behind the counter. There is a printer, a book-seller, a wine merchant, an apothecary, a watch and clock maker, a glass maker, a silversmith and many others to illustrate the variety of trades in York in the Georgian and Regency periods. In the old Debtors' Prison are a number of reconstructed workshops of, among others, brush, comb and clay pipe makers, tanner, printer, wheelwright, gunsmith, blacksmith and cutler.

Altogether York has a collection of material which makes the study of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries easy. It has further the Railway Museum, containing twelve actual engines and many small exhibits demonstrating signalling and so on. But other towns, though they have not the variety and abundance of material that there is in York, often have their own local trade well represented. Norwich, in the Bridewell Museum, has displays of a number of local industries with old and new products and tools side by side. Like York, Norwich was originally a great centre of the textile industry and in the museum are displayed hand-loom, winders, spools, wool combs and teasle-frames with photographs showing modern factory methods for comparison. To-day the biggest trade of the city is boot and shoe manufacture and there are also old-fashioned cobbler's tools displayed. In the Castle Museum, Norwich, there is a good exhibit showing the methods of manufacture of eighteenth-century porcelain made in East Anglia. Leicester, in the Newarke Houses Museum, shows a reconstruction of part of a street containing a stocking-frame knitter's cottage and a cobbler's shop. Near the museum is the reconstructed workshop of a watch and clock maker whose family gave up work in 1951 after having worked in Leicester for two hundred years. These towns and many others have in their museums specimens of old-fashioned cooking utensils, such as we described in the chapter on the village, and very often prints and engravings of the town as well. Flower's engravings of Leicester, which were made

about 1826, show places such as the Blue Boar Inn and the Shambles which have since disappeared, and from one of the pictures a small diorama of a street in the early nineteenth century has been constructed. (See plate 8.)

We have considered some of the things that we can find out about an old town whether it be a cathedral city like York or a manufacturing town like Leicester. It will be interesting therefore to study in more detail the growth of two very different towns, Birmingham and Brighton, which have material of another kind to offer. Both were relatively unimportant until the eighteenth century when they sprang into prominence for two quite different reasons: Birmingham because of its industrial development, and Brighton because of its tourist trade. It is worth while examining the causes for these developments, which are common to other towns besides these two, and also to try to find out what these towns were like in the eighteenth century before they reached the period of their biggest growth in the nineteenth century.

Birmingham<sup>1</sup> was classed in Domesday Book as a manor, slightly smaller than the adjoining manors of Aston, Selly Oak and Erdington which it later absorbed. It was granted a market in 1166, earlier than the other villages, and in 1251 an annual four day fair. By the fourteenth century, according to the 1327 subsidy return, it was already a market town. When Leland visited the town in about 1540 the industries that were to make it famous were already established. 'There be many smiths in the town that use to make knives and all manner of cutting tools and many lorimers that make bits and a great many nailors. So that a great part of the town is maintained by smiths. The smiths there have iron out of Staffordshire and Warwickshire and sell coal out of Staffordshire.' Leland also mentions the fact that there was only one parish church, which shows that, in contrast to York, Leicester or Norwich with their many medieval churches, Birmingham was quite a small place. This church was St. Martin's which still exists though it was almost entirely recon-

<sup>1</sup> For brief outline of History of Birmingham containing some contemporary illustrations and quotations see *Our Birmingham* 1943. Published by Cadbury Brothers, 1s.

For detailed history, see R. K. Dent, *The Making of Birmingham*, which has many illustrations, 1894.

structed in the nineteenth century. There are now within the bounds of Birmingham several medieval churches but they belonged to the surrounding villages which in the Middle Ages were quite separate.

Birmingham was never a medieval town in the sense that York and Leicester were. It had no all-powerful guild to restrict the entry of strangers and to keep a monopoly of trade in the hands of a few and it had no town corporation until 1838. The effect of this is well summed up in a note on a view of Birmingham published in 1732. 'Birmingham is neither a borough nor a corporation but remains what it was before the Norman Conquest, only a lordship. Nevertheless by the industry and ingenuity of its inhabitants and the advantage of its being an open, free place of trade, it is become famous for the vast quantities of iron and brass, besides thread and leather etcetera manufactured here and risen to a competition with any of the flourishing towns of England.'

A plan of Birmingham made in 1731 gives us an opportunity to see how it had expanded since the Middle Ages. The expansion was not round the Digbeth and Deritend area which was too marshy, but was northward on the hill. Old Square, Upper Priory and Lower Priory marked, then as now, a residential area where once the medieval priory of St. Thomas stood. St. Philip's Church, now the cathedral, was built on the hill in 1715 and fashionable suburbs had grown up round it. The sixteenth-century Grammar School is shown in New Street and public baths at Ladywell. In the seventeenth century Birmingham had been exempt from the Five Mile Act and so became a refuge for Nonconformists, and the subsequent growth of dissent is represented on the plan by the Meeting House in New Meeting Street and the Baptists' meeting house in New Street. Masshouse Lane marked the site of the Roman Catholic church which was ruined in the 1688 revolution. The beginnings of factory development are marked by Kettler's steelhouse in Steelhouse Lane and by Careless's steelhouse in Coleshill Street. Yet in spite of all this development the town was still small. The almshouses and the site for building at the bottom of Steelhouse Lane were the furthest development in that direction and at the other side of the town the moated manor houses and



parsonage were still shown. Near St. Martin's, the centre of the old town, stood the shambles and the market cross. In the East Prospect, or view of the town, published in 1732, the impression is even more rural. Cattle, sheep and horses graze in the meadows down by the river and the old many-arched bridge at Deritend is shown. (See plate 9.)

By the end of the eighteenth century Birmingham had grown considerably. There are two early Directories of the town<sup>1</sup> which together give an idea of what it was like then. Many of the common household objects which appear in fine arts museums were being made in Birmingham by this time. The Directory for 1770 gives a list of streets and the names and trades of those living in them and, at the end, a note describing the work of some of the principal trades : for example : thirty-three brass founders who made sconces, cabinet handles, escutcheons, hinges, cloak pins ; forty-four shoe buckle makers ; eighty-three makers of buttons of gilt, plate, silver, lacquer, pinchbeck, glass, horn, ivory, pearl ; thirty-eight gun and pistol makers ; forty-five platers of buckles, spurs, bridle bits, stirrups ; forty-eight ' toy makers ' working in metal or sometimes tortoiseshell and making among other things, seals, tweezers, toothpick cases, smelling bottles, snuff boxes, filigree inkstands and tea caddies. As well as all these people engaged in manufacture there were all the usual tradesmen one would expect to find in a town : baker, butcher, pastry-cook, grocer, confectioner, shoemaker, hatter, tailor, cooper, mason and maltster.

The Directory of 1777 is interesting because it describes the state of the town at that time. It was two miles long including the hamlet of Deritend, about the same in breadth, and lay in the shape of a half moon. There were estimated to be 7000 houses and 40,000 inhabitants as well as many visitors. The writer of the Directory explains the prosperity of the town. ' The trade of this place has greatly the advantage over any other in the kingdom . . . as a pair of buckles, a watch chain, a sword hilt etc., which are worth from one pound to five pounds when finished and some a great deal more, can be made from materials which were not originally worth one penny.' Later on he says, ' This town being no corporation, is governed by two bailiffs,

<sup>1</sup> In the British Museum in later editions.

two constables and a headborough, and is free for anyone to come and settle in it, which contributes not a little to the increase of its trade, buildings and inhabitants.' The public buildings had increased by this time: the medieval spire of St. Martin's and the Renaissance tower of St. Philip's had been joined by St. Mary's and St. Bartholomew's, and St. Paul's chapel was being built. There were six Nonconformist meeting houses including one for Quakers. A Church of England school and a Dissenting school had come to share the education of the children with King Edward's School. For entertainment there were two theatres both of which the writer says were shut because of a disagreement between them, and the Vauxhall Gardens at Duddeston which had a bowling green and a billiard table and held musical entertainments in the summer. The newspaper *Aris Gazette*<sup>1</sup> mentions bull baiting as another form of entertainment as late as 1798 and there is still a street in Birmingham named The Bull Ring. At the newly erected 'Hotel' concerts and balls were held in the winter but it was not yet furnished as an inn, which the writer thinks may have been due to lack of funds.

The poor were catered for in the workhouse in Lichfield Street and six hundred pounds a year was raised by levies for the care of them. In the *Aris Gazette* in 1791 there was an advertisement put in by the overseers of the poor for the return of thirty husbands who had run away and left their families as a charge on the parish. Among them were brass founder, blacksmith, button burnisher, button chafer, button finisher, button turner, brass candlestick maker, joiner. They are described in detail and from the descriptions we get a glimpse of some of the men we might have seen in the streets in the late eighteenth century. There was a gun finisher 'about five feet two inches high, twenty-two years old, strong man, black hair curled, pale complexion, stoops in the shoulders; had on light drab coat, flowered waistcoat and corduroy breeches.' The people of Birmingham had also begun to take responsibility for the sick. A hospital was begun in 1767 but was not yet finished owing to lack of subscriptions. A hospital 'seems particularly necessary in this place, where manufacturers are by the nature of their employment exposed to manifold injuries in their limbs and health'.

<sup>1</sup> British Museum Newspaper Library.

The Directory described improvements in the town which had been carried out by Act of Parliament. The Navigation Act, by which the canal from the collieries was built in 1769, had brought coals to Birmingham 'for half the price they were formerly; and the quantities consumed here are astonishing, besides those burnt in common and household use, fires being necessary in almost every branch of manufactory.' As there was no navigable river coal had hitherto had to come by wagon. This canal, and the others that followed linking Birmingham to Bristol, Hull, Liverpool and London, was one of the most important reasons for the expansion of Birmingham in the late eighteenth century.

The second reason for the great expansion was the invention of the steam-engine by James Watt and the manufacture and sale of it by Matthew Boulton. Boulton's factory at Soho<sup>1</sup> was one of the earliest to combine the making of a number of 'toys'. In 1765 there were six hundred people employed making steel jewelry, buttons, buckles, fobs, etc. Later, goods of Sheffield plate were made and then goods of solid silver. Birmingham silver had to go to London to be tried and stamped. This was a great waste of time and money so in 1773 Boulton got an Assay Office established in Birmingham. In the City Museum there are examples of his silver tableware, inkstands and candlesticks and also of his other fine wares such as ormolu and bluejohn or fluorspar vases. In partnership with Watt, Boulton began to manufacture steam-engines, most of which were sent to pump water out of the Cornish mines. The development of the steam-engine can be seen in the Museum of Science and Industry in Birmingham and in the Science Museum in London. In 1795 Soho Foundry was established and it made among other things gas-lighting plant. In 1788 Soho Mint was founded and examples of the coins and medals that were produced are now in the museum at Birmingham.

When we walk through the streets of Birmingham we are overpowered by the nineteenth-century buildings that crowd on all sides, but if we look carefully we can find here and there some Georgian houses to give us an idea of what the streets

<sup>1</sup> See *Boulton, Watt and the Soho Undertakings*, published by the Birmingham City Museum, the Branch of Science and Industry.

looked like in the late eighteenth century. Aston Hall, though primarily a Jacobean house as we saw in Chapter 3, has some eighteenth-century furniture. Soho Hall at Harmondsworth was designed by Wyatt for Matthew Boulton and is handsomely decorated with Sheraton woodwork. Edgbaston Hall and Moseley Hall are respectively early and late eighteenth-century buildings. Besides these mansions there are a number of town houses still remaining in the streets which were developed in the eighteenth century such as St. Paul's Square, Bradford Street, Easy Row, Great Charles Street, Moor Street, Newhall Street, Temple Row and Hagley Road. There are several Regency houses in Hagley Road. The Retreat, Warner Street, has a mixture of classical and Gothic motifs, and Metchley Abbey at Harborne is entirely nineteenth-century Gothic.

There is a pictorial guide-book of Birmingham published in 1849<sup>1</sup> with a map which shows us what enormous expansion had taken place since the eighteenth century. The railway which linked Birmingham to London is shown and there are houses springing up all round the station which was then at Curzon Street. Building had gone on extensively beyond Steelhouse Lane although Soho and Aston are still separate villages. The guide-book gives some details about the manufactures of Birmingham and notes one significant change. Buckles had been superseded by shoelaces about 1813 so that the buckle makers had had to find other jobs: this was not difficult in a town with such a diversity of trades. The factories even at this date were not like the vast buildings of the Manchester cotton factories, but still retained their small workshops where artisans were reckoned in dozens not in hundreds. However, various large factories besides the one at Soho did exist. The Cambridge Street works, for instance, had attached to it an institution of a kind which we think of as only beginning in the twentieth century; this was a school for two hundred boys who were either employed in the factory or were the children of workmen. Many new public buildings had sprung up since the eighteenth century: there were now eighteen other churches besides St. Martin's and St. Philip's which gives some idea of the scale of development in building and population.

<sup>1</sup> British Museum Library.

In the 1832 Reform Act, Birmingham was at last represented in Parliament and in 1838 it was made into a corporation. In the *Aris Gazette* for 1838 there is an account of a public meeting at which the desirability of a corporation was discussed. It was feared that the party spirit would spoil trade, that there would be more taxes to pay to provide public buildings and salaries of public officers, but it was agreed, on the other hand, that the expenses of going to Warwick for the Assizes would be avoided. By 1849 when the corporation had been in existence for just over ten years the writer of the guide-book was able to note that a town hall and a town gaol had been built, presumably out of public funds.

The conditions of the streets of towns in the mid-nineteenth century are described in the reports of the Royal Commissioners of the newly set up Board of Public Health. For instance a doctor in one report on Birmingham described a district where 'there is throughout a very bad and insufficient supply of water. . . . Many of the courts, like most places where cottages are situated in the centre of a large town, are closed in on all sides and are entered from the street by a covered passage: the privies and cesspools are crowded against the houses and there is a deficiency of light and ventilation: there are about three hundred and thirty-six butchers in the town many of whom have private slaughter houses crowded in amongst the cottages.' Even in the better-class residential areas of Hagley Road 'the gutters are receptacles of drains and filth until they become in a most putrid state.'

It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that, under Joseph Chamberlain's mayoralty, this began to be remedied. In 1876 the water supply was taken over by the corporation, three thousand polluted wells were closed, new water mains were laid and reservoirs made to ensure a good supply of water to the crowded city. At the same time under the Artisans' and Labourers' Dwellings Act of 1875 slums were cleared in the central area and Corporation Street was built in their place. The *Graphic* of 1875 had illustrations of some of Birmingham's slum courts which were later cleared away. It described 'a miserable region of damp, dilapidation and decay, where deaths are twice as numerous as in the suburb of Edg-

baston—young children die especially fast, as one of the tenants pithily put it "there's more bugs than babies"—where perfect health is unknown and decent habits almost impossible.' Since this time Birmingham has continued to clear slums and to re-house workers in new estates on the edge of the city and has in fact been a pioneer in such work.

In tracing the development of Birmingham we have seen how with the help of maps, prospects, directories and newspapers it is possible to get an idea of a town at different stages in its development. It is not so well endowed with old buildings, and its museums, though fine in their way, do not picture the life of the past in quite the same way as those of York, Norwich or Leicester, so we have had to use different sources. The town of Brighton offers scope for more extensive use of this kind of material.

Brighton<sup>1</sup> is now one of Britain's thirty largest towns but in the early eighteenth century it was according to Defoe 'a poor fishing town'. The first map, which was made in 1779, shows that most of the town was contained in a rectangle formed by the sea on the south and by West Street, East Street and North Street; the only other development was North Row, now Marlborough Street, which was north of North Street. The main approach from London was still through Lewes as the route via Patcham was only just coming into use.

The main cause of the development of Brighton was the fashion for sea-bathing, first advocated for the health by Dr. Russell. In 1769 the first hot and cold sea water baths were built at the Pool and many others followed. One of the most famous baths was that of Sake Deen Mahomed which was where the Queen's Hotel now stands. An *Ode to Mahomed* attributes the growth of the town to him:

'While thus beneath thy flannel shades,  
Fat dowagers and wrinkled maids  
Rebloom in adolescence,  
I marvel not that friends tell friends,  
And Brighton every day extends  
Its circuses and crescents.'

<sup>1</sup> See *Brighton*, Edmund W. Gilbert, Methuen 1955, which contains many maps, and contemporary quotations and illustrations. There are also some in the Museum and Art Gallery.

When the Prince Regent became a resident at Brighton in 1787 and brought his court there the town became one of the most fashionable resorts in Europe. New buildings sprang up to house the constant stream of visitors, and the number and speed of coaches between London and Brighton increased enormously.

A map of 1808 shows considerable expansion since 1779. North of North Street, Church Street had been built and the intervening space filled with houses and streets. The open space known as the Old Steyne now had its parade, and east of the Old Steyne there were three roads parallel with the coast: Marine Parade, St. James Street and Edward Street and further east still, on the front, was Royal Crescent, at this time rather isolated.

A map of 1827 shows that building had caught up and passed Royal Crescent and that Kemp Town was the most easterly group of buildings. By this time there had been more expansion inland, north of Edward Street and also westward as far as Preston Street, Bedford Square and Brunswick Square. Two views of Brighton, which are in the Art Gallery, show how its aspect had changed. They are both taken from the north looking down the Steyne valley. In 1819 there were a few buildings in the valley and some on the slopes on either side: harvesting was taking place on the hill from which the view was taken and there were cattle grazing lower down. In the 1837 view buildings can be seen all over the two hills on either side of the Steyne and, where the harvesting was illustrated in 1819, there were by 1837 neat bow-fronted Regency houses with balconies. The Parade, where the cattle were shown, was a park with railings and there were carriages driving up and down.

These maps and prospects show us very clearly how the town developed in the Regency period. In the newspapers<sup>1</sup> and in contemporary diaries and letters we can find information which will help us to build up a picture of the kind of lives which people led in Regency Brighton.

People came to Brighton by coach, and the *Brighton Herald* has many coach advertisements. For instance in June 1812 there is an advertisement from the Blue Coach office. 'The original eight, ten and eleven o'clock coaches to London set out from the general Blue Coach office, number forty four East Street, to the

<sup>1</sup> The *Brighton Herald* from 1812 is in the Newspaper Offices at Brighton.

George and Blue Boar, London.' The usual cost was fourteen shillings inside and seven shillings outside and the journey took about eight hours. As roads improved the time of the journey was considerably reduced; by 1830 it could be done in four-and-a-half hours. There were twenty-eight coaches in 1811 travelling to and from London and also a number going to towns in Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire. They usually carried four inside and four outside. Sometimes the advertisements had a picture of the coach with the coachman driving the four horses, and the guard standing behind with his horn to warn the toll gate keepers and with his pistol to keep off the highwaymen.

There are many Regency houses still remaining in Brighton. Royal Crescent and Regency Square are fine examples of planned blocks of houses. Usually the houses are built of brick and covered with stucco or painted plaster. They often have bow fronts, pillared and pedimented doorways with fanlights and, on the first floor, a balcony with ornamental iron-work railings roofed like a pagoda with curving metal. There are a number of contemporary prints which show not only the buildings but also the people. One of Lewes Crescent in 1837 shows a fine sweep of stucco houses round a lawn, a carriage, several men on horseback and various groups of people on the parade overlooking the sea.

Some of the visitors to Brighton bought houses to which they could return each year; some stayed in hotels and some in boarding houses. All these different classes of people are catered for in the advertisement columns in the *Brighton Herald*. The view and the size of the room where guests could be entertained were the most important prerequisites in a house for sale. In March 1820 there were two houses for sale in Marine Parade. 'Each containing a butler's room and pantry, housekeeper's room, large kitchen, scullery, store room, back entrance and yard. Entrance hall, two large parlours of fine proportion, communicating by folding doors, forming a large dining room, . . . an elegant drawing room . . . fitted with marble chimney pieces, water closets and eight large, airy bedrooms making up commodiously thirteen beds.'

The Hove Museum contains two rooms of this period which help us to imagine what some of these houses must have looked like inside. The Georgian room contains a gilt painted mirror



and chandelier from the early eighteenth century, Chippendale chairs and settee, a Hepplewhite cabinet and a Chinese lacquer cabinet. In the Regency room there is a writing bureau with a drop front and a marble top which has decoration in the Egyptian style, a mirror with an eagle above, a settee, mahogany side tables and chairs. There is also some eighteenth-century porcelain.

The entertainments provided for the visitors to Brighton in Regency times were almost as numerous as they are now. The *Brighton Herald* advertised packet boats to Dieppe, libraries, balls, racing, picnics on the downs, bathing. Moreover there was always the opportunity of joining in the fashionable parade round the Old Steyne. In 1818 the *Herald* said. 'The Steyne in the afternoon displays the most elegant assemblages. The band of the 35th Regiment attends and contributes to the universal gaiety.' In the public libraries the entertainment was evidently not confined to books. 'Donaldson, Tuppin and Wright continue to display the most liberal spirit. Loo is as much in favour as ever with our visitors and its attendant profits enable the proprietors to provide most excellent singing and music'. For those visiting the Dyke there was in 1816 'reopened neat summer house on the spot, furnished with elegant refreshments. A large powerful telescope for the use of the company. N.B. Cream and water ices and much improved ginger beverage at the shop in North Street'. People making the trip across the Channel had, until 1823 when the Chain pier was built, to go out to the packet in small boats. In 1812 the *Herald* notes that a hundred passengers in one week in May went to Dieppe in the nine packets then running.

There is an interesting description in a Brighton Directory<sup>1</sup> of about 1800 of the way in which people bathed. The best time was early in the morning. 'The bathing machine is a wooden box . . . raised on high wooden wheels . . . The machine is pushed forward into the sea while the bather is preparing for the ablution. The guide waits in the middle of the steps to receive the bather who when dipt, reascends the machine which is then dragged back up the beach'. It is suggested that exercise be taken after bathing to encourage sweating, and one doctor

<sup>1</sup> British Museum.

recommended the drinking of sea water in milk to avoid 'the loathing, sickness and thirst' which comes from drinking pure sea water. As the writer of *Brighton, A comic sketch*, said in 1830 :

'And all with ails in heart or lungs,  
In liver or in spine,  
Rush coastward to be cured like tongues,  
By dipping into brine.'

This belief in the medicinal value of sea water was one of the main reasons for the growth of Brighton; the other was the presence of Royalty. The Prince Regent lived in the Pavilion, a unique palace which remains to-day very much as it was after Nash had remodelled it in the Indian style 1815-1819. There are a number of contemporary descriptions of people's reactions to the onion-shaped domes. Cobbett compared them to 'a parcel of cradle spits sticking up out of the mouths of so many squat decanters.' Miss Barry, Horace Walpole's friend said, 'The effect is more like a china shop baroque arranged than the abode of a prince. All is gaudy without looking gay and all is crowded with ornaments without being magnificent.' Nowadays the interior has been restored and in the summer exhibitions of Regency furniture are held there. We can see the rooms in the time of the Regent in reproductions of Nash's Views. He shows us the Banqueting Hall in 1824 where the guests are seated at a silver-laden table which stretched the length of the room beneath the enormous dragon chandelier. He shows us the kitchen with its palm-tree pillars, the food being cooked on rows of spits before a roaring fire, the central table covered with silver dishes and the chef ordering his scullions about. Other views show the outside of the Pavilion, the music room with its dragons hanging from the ceiling and the drawing-room with its Chinese wallpaper.

In the letters and diaries of Thomas Creevey,<sup>1</sup> who was at Brighton in 1805 and was invited by the Prince to dine at the Pavilion several times a week for about four months, we get an idea of how the evenings were passed there. He said that dinner was punctually at 6 p.m. with about sixteen people. Mrs. Fitzherbert played cards a great deal but the Prince never touched a card. He 'was occupied in talking to his guests and very much

<sup>1</sup> The Creevey Papers. Edited by Sir Herbert Maxwell.

in listening to and giving directions to the band. At twelve o'clock punctually the band stopped and sandwiches and wine and water handed about and shortly after the Prince made a bow and we all dispersed.' Creevey had heard a lot about the Prince's drinking, but though he drank a great deal at dinner he only once saw him drunk. Mrs. Creevey writing to her husband later the same year said: 'O this wicked pavilion, we were there till half-past one this morning and it has kept me in bed with the headache until twelve to-day.' She then went on to describe how the Prince had been firing at a target with an air-gun and had wanted the ladies to try: one hit a fiddler, another the door!

The *Brighton Herald* gives a description of a ball held in honour of Princess Charlotte's birthday in January 1817 at which there were about three hundred guests. 'The dresses of the ladies were remarkably elegant. Feathers were general. Many were most splendidly attired, diamonds, rubies, pearls, etc. being in sparkling profusion . . . ornamental combs half concealed in dropping ringlets, ear-rings, bracelets and necklaces were much worn'. The dances were mostly French quadrilles and waltzes. Supper was between one and two in the morning and then 'the pleasures of the ballroom we once again resorted to and the enlivening tones of the stringed instruments and tabor kept the gay votaries of the dance upon the light fantastic toe.' This went on until 6 a.m.

Life at the Pavilion was sumptuous and extravagant. Large numbers of people were entertained and huge meals were served to them. An extract of a letter from the Countess Lieven in 1821 gives a vivid picture of the luxurious life and the amount of money it must all have cost. 'One spends the evening half lying on cushions, the lights are dazzling and there are perfumes, music, liqueur. To light the three rooms used when the family is alone costs one hundred and fifty guineas an evening, when the apartment is fully occupied it is double that.'

After the Regent's death William IV continued the royal patronage of Brighton but Queen Victoria disliked the publicity of large crowds of people staring at her and in 1840 gave up Brighton as a royal residence. This might have been the end of the town as a tourist resort had it not been for the coming of the railway in 1841, which made it possible for increasing numbers

of people to come to the coast. Knight's *Excursion Companion* reported seventy-three thousand passengers for one week in May, 1850. Building increased and Brighton became a popular place for schools because it was so healthy: it was here that Dickens' anxious Mr. Dombey sent his precious son Paul.<sup>1</sup> Brighton also became a dormitory for London. Cobbett had said in 1823 that the coaches were so quick that stock jobbers could live in Brighton though they carried on work in London. In 1851 Knight's *Excursion Companion* stated. 'We might indeed almost class Brighton as a suburb of the metropolis: for the London merchant now goes backwards and forwards to his marine villa so regularly, with more ease and in as little time as he formerly occupied in driving to Hampstead or Norwood.' What Dr. Russell and the Prince Regent had begun, the railways continued and so the great popular resort that we know to-day emerged.

English towns are so varied in their size and the reasons for their growth are so different that it is very difficult to generalize about them. The most that can be done is to encourage people to look at old maps and surviving buildings and to try to track the periods of expansion and to look in the museum, the newspapers, town records and contemporary topographical accounts to try to get a picture of it at successive periods.

## SOME BUILDINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN A TOWN

### RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

*Middle Ages*: Parish church usually mainly fifteenth century; ruined abbey or priory sometimes part of later buildings.

*17th century*: Woodwork in church.

*Early 18th century*: First Unitarian, Quaker, Baptist Congregationalist chapels and meeting houses.

*Late 18th century*: First Methodist chapels.

*19th century*: New suburban churches and chapels.

### DEFENCES

*Middle Ages*: Remains of castle, castle mound, parts of walls, gatehouse.

<sup>1</sup> *Dombey and Son*, Charles Dickens, contains a description of a boarding house and a school at Brighton in the first half of the nineteenth century.

## HOUSES, INNS AND ALMSHOUSES

*16th century*: Timber-framed houses.

*Early 17th century*: Almshouses; timber part of an inn; brick or stone houses rarely more than two stories high and with mullioned windows.

*Late 17th century*: Timber cottages; brick and stone cottages with steep gables and mullioned windows; almshouses; inns.

*Early 18th century*: Brick or stone houses three or four stories high with long narrow sash windows, parapet along the top; larger inns like the houses.

*Late 18th century*: Houses as above with pillared porticoes and semi-circular fanlights over the front doors; houses in planned blocks of terraces, crescents, squares.

*Early 19th century*: Stucco houses often bow-fronted; sometimes stucco front affixed to older buildings; detached stucco villas in suburbs.

*Mid 19th century*: Large sheets of plate glass substituted for small panes in windows; large houses in suburbs in Italian, Tudor or Swiss styles; gardens of earlier houses in centre built over with courtyards of red brick cottages.

*Late 19th century*: Streets of bow-fronted, two-story, red brick villas in terraces or semi-detached, often near station; villas on outskirts in brick, Gothic or Queen Anne styles.

## MARKETS, SHOPS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS

*Middle Ages*: Market cross, occasionally guildhall.

*17th century*: Possibly customs house in a port, earliest grammar schools.

*Late 18th century*: Town halls, bow-windowed shop fronts, old wharves and warehouses on canals.

*Early 19th century*: Assize courts, large town halls, covered markets.

*Mid 19th century*: Private banks, corn exchanges, front gardens of older houses made into shops.

*Late 19th century*: Red or brown terra-cotta frontages to banks, institutions and shops; fire station; post office; public library and museum; Salvation Army; Mission halls; schools.

## COMMUNICATIONS

*Any period*: Bridges.

*Late 18th and early 19th centuries*: Canal wharves, quays, locks and bridges.

*Mid 19th century* : First railway station usually in Swiss, Tudor or Italian styles.

*Late 19th century* : Railway stations and suburban stations.

### SOME LOCAL SOURCES TO CONSULT

#### *County Record Office*

Early plans and topographical pictures : eighteenth century onwards.

Old guide-books : eighteenth century onwards.

Trade Directories : eighteenth century onwards.

First Edition of Ordnance Survey Six Inch maps, 1885.

Parish records (see headings under village).

Town records : may be published.

Newspapers : late eighteenth century onwards (probably in local newspaper office.)

#### *Public Library*

Kelly's Directory.

Victoria County History.

#### *Museum*

Machinery and tools used in local trades, objects made in the town.

Topographical pictures and plans as above.

Costumes.

Kitchen utensils as listed under village.

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\*Most large towns publish guide-books.

\*London Museum guide, 1951.

\*York Castle Museum guide, 1951.

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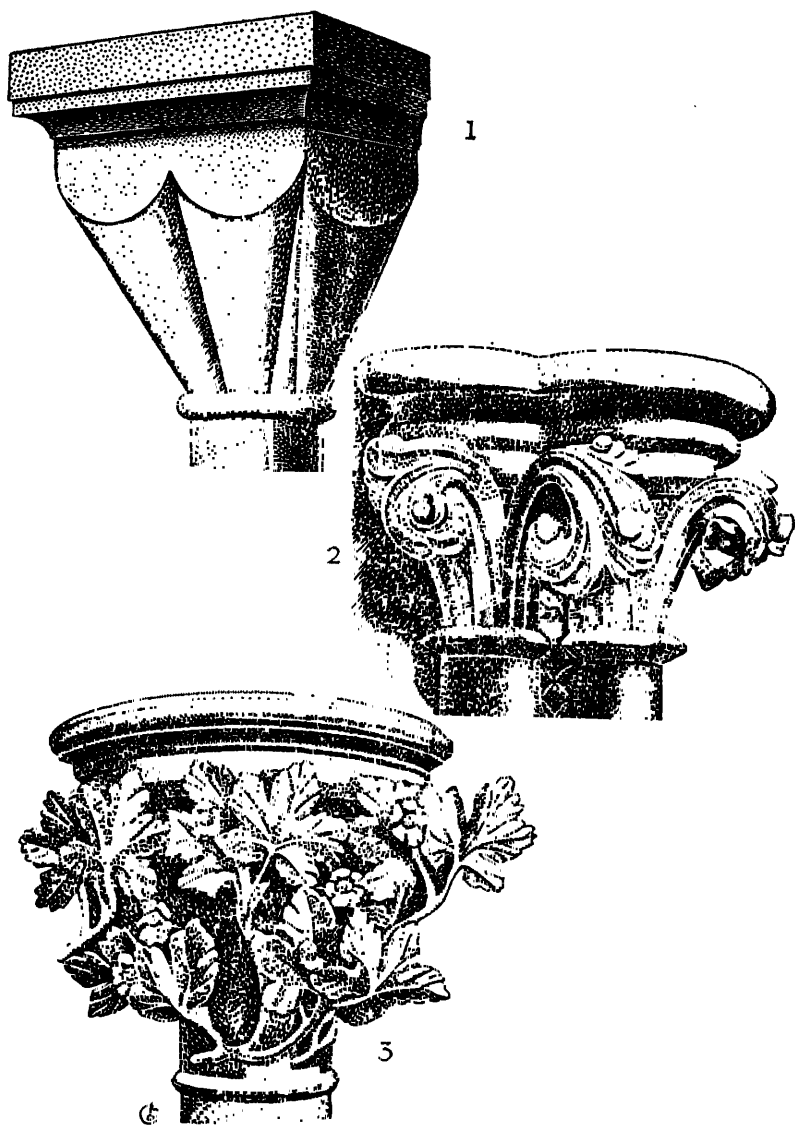


FIG 13. MEDIEVAL CAPITALS

- (1) Norman Capital from Norwich Cathedral.
- (2) Early English Capital from Lincoln Cathedral.
- (3) Decorated Capital from the Chapter House, Southwell Minster.



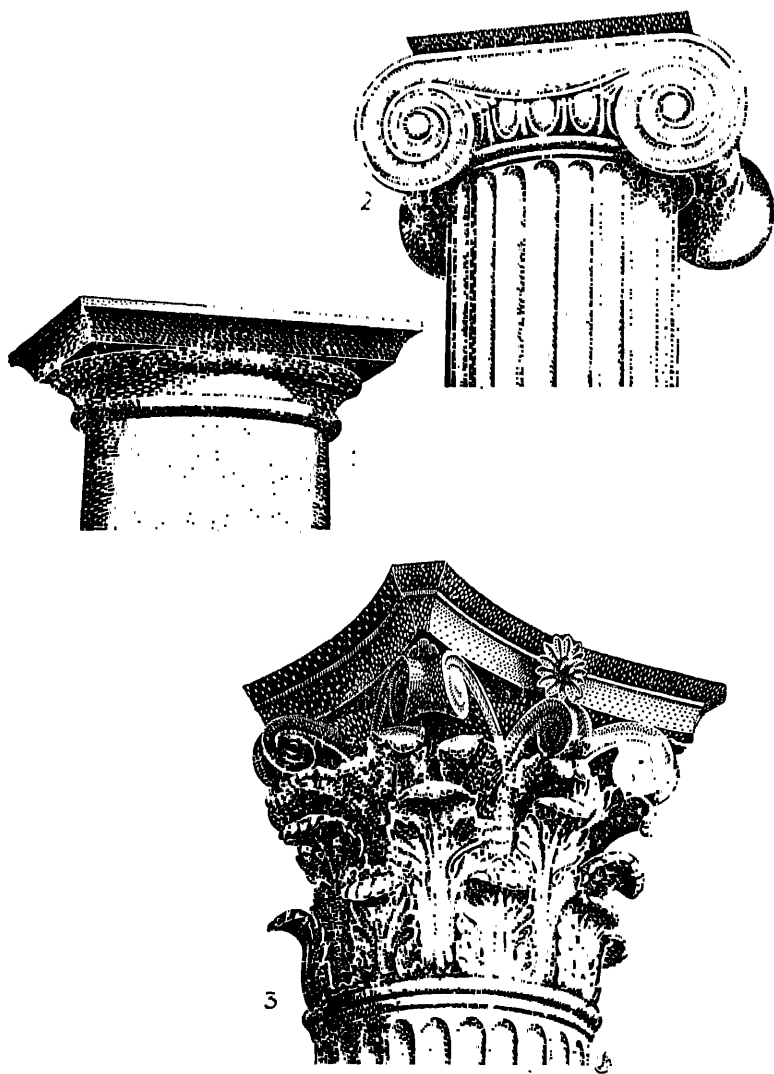


FIG. 14. CLASSICAL CAPITALS

- (1) Doric Capital from an eighteenth century doorway in Cheltenham.
- (2) Ionic Capital from early nineteenth century terrace round Regents Park, London.
- (3) Corinthian Capital from early nineteenth century terrace round Regents Park, London.

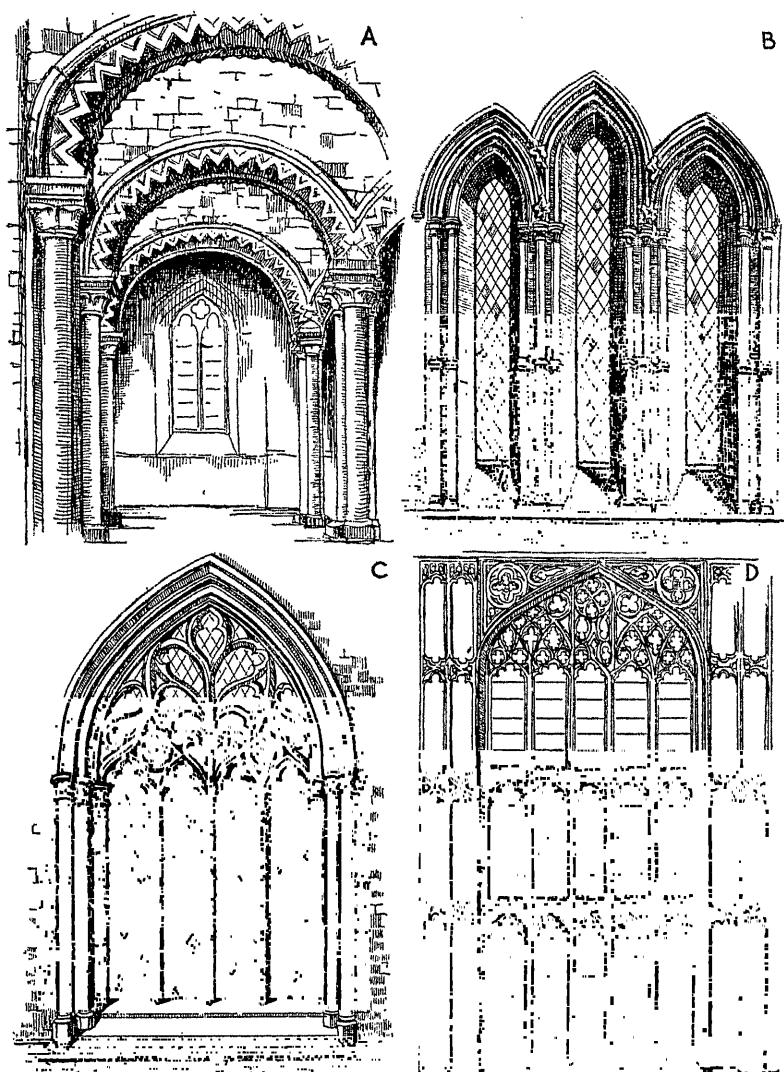


FIG. 15) EXAMPLES OF MEDIEVAL OPENINGS

- (a) Norman Arches in Durham Cathedral.
- (b) Early English Windows.
- (c) Decorated Windows at Beverley Minster.
- (d) Perpendicular Window in Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster.

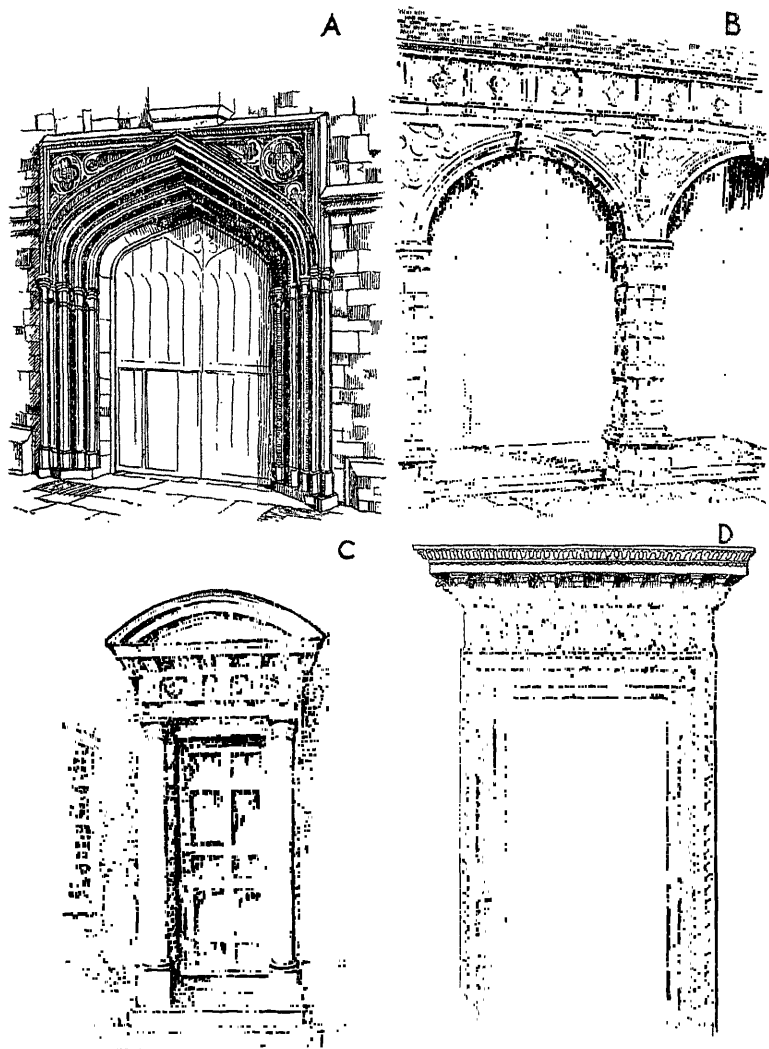


FIG. 16. EXAMPLES OF LATER OPENINGS

- (a) Perpendicular Doorway. St. John's College, Oxford.
- (b) Renaissance Arch. Bramshill, Hampshire.
- (c) Doorway with Pediment. Colchester, Essex.
- (d) Doorway with Architrave. Basildon Park, Berkshire.

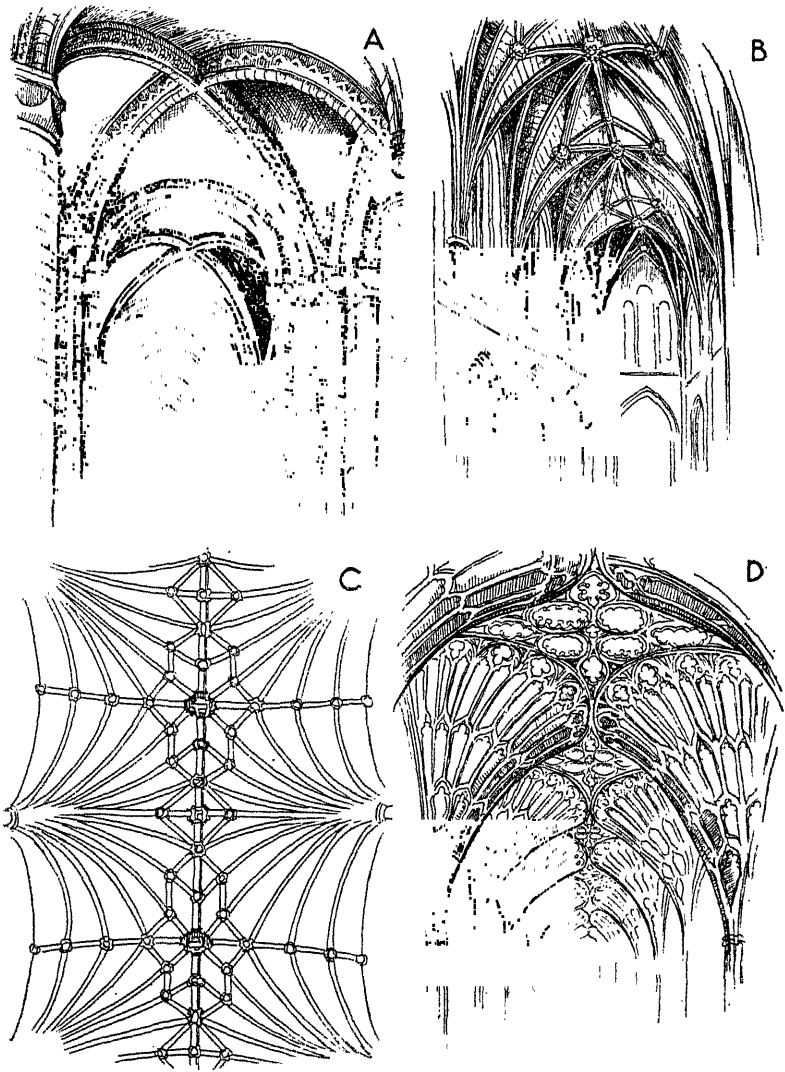


FIG. 17. STONE VAULTS

- (a) Norman Ribbed Vault. Durham.
- (b) Tierceron Vault. Pershore.
- (c) Lierne. Norwich.
- (d) Fan. Gloucester.

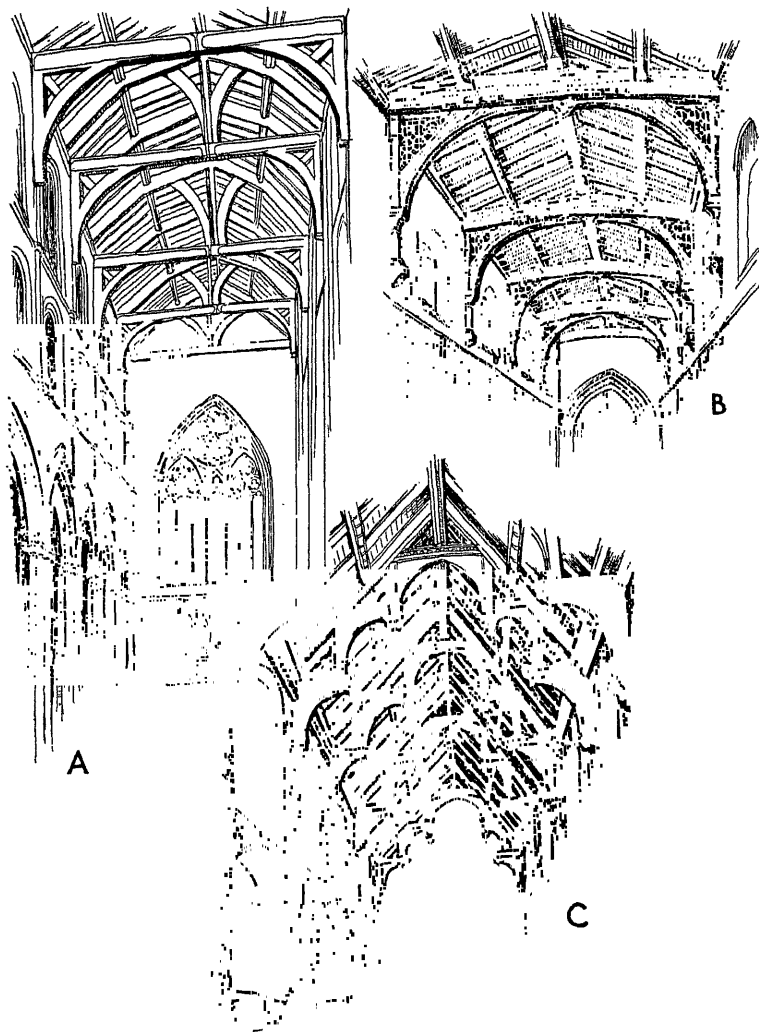


FIG. 18. WOODEN ROOFS

- (a) Trussed rafter with beam kingpost, at Bridlington.
- (b) Flat Roof. Raunds, Northampton.
- (c) Hammer Beam Roof. Grundisburgh, Suffolk.

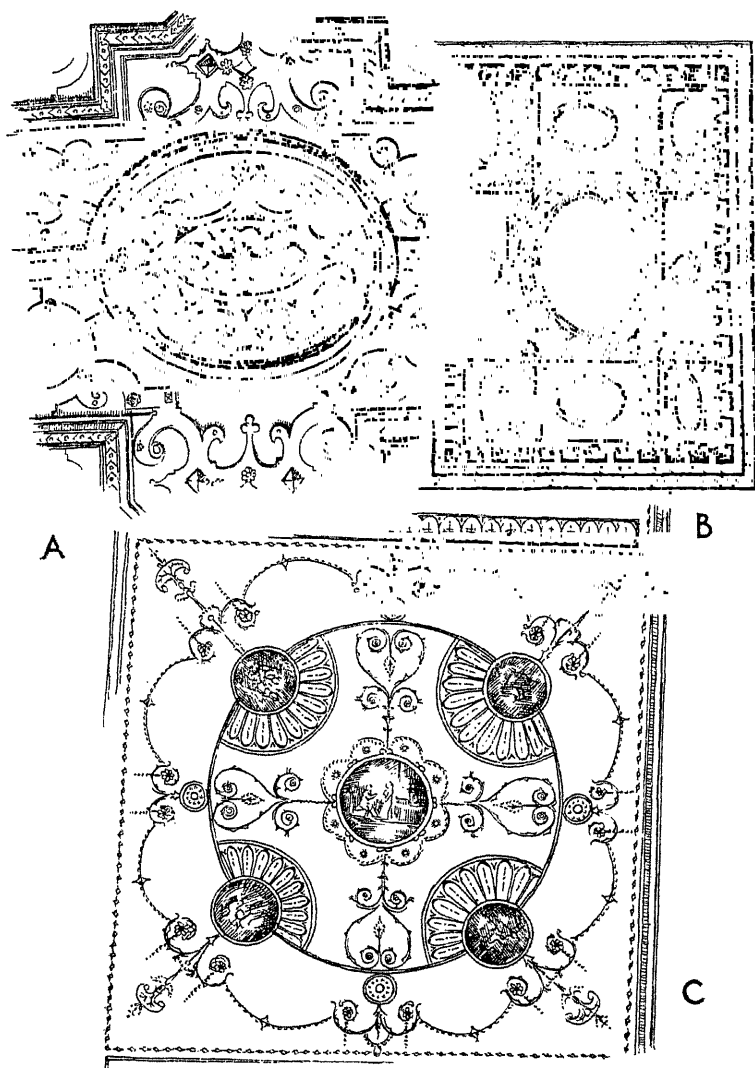


FIG. 19. CEILINGS

- (a) Jacobean. Compton Wynyates.
- (b) Late VIIth Century. Coleshill.
- (c) Adam. 20 St. James's Square, London.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- ADZE.** A tool like an axe with the blade set at right angles to the handle and curving inwards towards it; used for chipping or slicing away the surface of wood.
- AMPHORA.** A large, two-handled vessel used by the Romans for holding wine or oil.
- ANTHROPOLOGY.** The study of mankind.
- APSE.** A semi-circular or polygonal termination, or projection from a church or public building.
- ARABESQUE.** Mural or surface decoration in colour or low relief, composed in flowing lines of branches, leaves and scroll-work fancifully intertwined.
- ARCHAEOLOGY.** The scientific study of the remains and monuments of the prehistoric period.
- ARCHITRAVE.** 1. The stone which in Classical and Renaissance architecture is thrown from one column or pilaster to the next.  
2. The moulding which in the same styles is used to ornament the margin of a door or window opening or arch.
- ARTIFACT.** A man-made implement.
- BALL FLOWER.** An ornament representing a globular bud, placed usually in a hollow moulding.
- BAROQUE.** A florid style of late Renaissance architecture prevalent in the eighteenth century.
- BOSS.** An ornamental projection in a roof vault placed at the intersection of the ribs to conceal the join.
- BROACH SPIRE.** A spire springing from a tower without a parapet and with pyramidal features at each of its four sides to connect them to the four angles of the towers.
- BUTTRESS.** A projection built up against a wall to give strength or furnish support.
- BYGONES.** Old domestic utensils, agricultural implements and craftsmen's tools.
- CAPITAL.** The head of a column or pilaster, usually with a characteristic form of decoration which helps to distinguish styles. See illustrations.
- CARTOUCHE.** A tablet for an inscription or for ornament, representing a sheet of paper with the ends rolled up.
- CARYATID.** A female figure used as a column to support an entablature.



- CINQUEFOIL.** An ornamental design resembling the leaf of cinquefoil which has compound leaves each with five leaflets.
- CLASSIC ARCHITECTURE.** The architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. See Renaissance.
- CLERESTORY.** The upper story or row of windows lighting the nave of a church.
- COMMODE.** A piece of furniture with drawers and shelves, a chest of drawers.
- CONSOLE TABLE.** A table supported by a fixed bracket against a wall; also a movable side table supported by consoles or brackets.
- CORBEL.** A projecting stone or timber supporting or seeming to support a weight, e.g. the carved stone supports of the roof in a church.
- CORNICE.** The projecting or crowning portion of an entablature or of a building or a stage or story of a building.
- COURT CUPBOARD.** A cabinet usually consisting of three widely spaced shelves separated by pillars.
- CRENELLATION.** A notched or indented battlement or a parapet with loop-holes.
- CROCKET.** A tuft of leaves arranged in a formal shape, used to decorate ornamental gables, the ribs of spires, etc.
- CROSS-BOW.** A bow fixed across a wooden stock and having a mechanism for holding and releasing the string.
- CUPOLA.** A rounded vault or dome forming the roof or part of the roof of a building.
- CUSP.** The projecting point thrown out to form the leaf-shaped foliations at the heads of Gothic windows and in tracery and panels.
- DADO.** The finishing of wood running along the lower part of the walls of a room, made to represent a continuous pedestal. Hence any lining, painting or papering of the lower part of an interior wall different from that of the upper part.
- DAMASK.** A rich silk fabric woven with elaborate designs and figures. Also applied to fabrics of wool, linen or cotton.
- DIAPER.** A uniform repeat pattern of leaves or flowers carved or painted on the surface of a wall.
- DORMER WINDOW.** A window pierced through a sloping roof and placed under a small gable or roof of its own.
- DOUBLET.** A close-fitting body-garment, with or without sleeves, worn by men from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries.
- DUTCH GABLE.** A curved gable which came mainly to eastern England from Holland in the seventeenth century.

- ENAMEL.** A semi-opaque variety of glass applied as a coloured ornament to metallic surfaces.
- ENCLOSURE.** The fencing in or enclosing of common land with a view to appropriation. The two periods of most intensive enclosure were the sixteenth century for the purpose of sheep farming and in the eighteenth century for the purpose of scientific arable farming and stock breeding. Enclosure might be carried out by private arrangement between a landowner and the owners of rights on common land or it might be by Act of Parliament. It is from Enclosure by Act of Parliament which was common in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that we get the map and written record of those who had a share in the common land, which was made by the Parliamentary Commissioners.
- ENTABLATURE.** In Classical and Renaissance architecture the superstructure above the columns. It is divided into the architrave which rests on the columns, the frieze and the cornice.
- ETHNOGRAPHY.** The scientific description of nations or races of men, their customs, habits, material culture.
- FARTHINGALE.** A frame-work of hoops to extend the skirts ; a hooped petticoat.
- FINIAL.** A formally arranged bunch of foliage or other similar ornament forming the top of a pinnacle, gablet or other ornamental feature of Gothic architecture.
- FRIEZE.** 1. The middle member of a Classical or Renaissance entablature, often sculptured and carved. 2. Any band of sculptured ornament.
- GARGOYLE.** A projecting waterspout usually carved in stone, more rarely in metal.
- GAZEBO.** A turret or lantern in the roof of a house commanding an extensive view ; also a similar erection in a garden.
- GOTHIC.** A style of architecture prevalent in England from the end of the twelfth to the fifteenth century of which the chief characteristic is the pointed arch.
- GROTESQUE.** A kind of decorative painting or sculpture in which portions of human and animal forms are fantastically interwoven with foliage and flowers.
- GROTTO.** An excavation or structure made to imitate a rocky cave : popular in England from the seventeenth century onwards as a kind of summer house in the gardens of country houses ; sometimes contained waterworks.
- GUILLOCHE.** An ornament in the form of bonds of two or more strings twisting over each other so as to repeat the same figure, in a continued series, by the spiral returning of the bands.

- HALF-TIMBERED CONSTRUCTION.** A mode of building in which a framework of timbers is displayed and the spaces between them are filled with plaster or bricks.
- HIPPED ROOF.** A roof without gables, having hips or sloping ends, the ends being inclined as well as the sides.
- INLAY.** A form of decoration, usually in wood or marble, in which coloured materials are laid into sinkings of geometric or naturalistic shapes cut into the surface to be decorated.
- INVENTORY.** A detailed list of articles, such as goods, chattels and property found to have been in the possession of a person at his death or conviction, sometimes with a statement of the nature and value of each.
- JAPANNING.** A resinous varnish which originally came from Japan, from the seventeenth century applied to other kinds of furniture varnish usually with 'Japanese' type figures and foliage picked out in gold on red or black background.
- JESS.** A short strap fastened round each of the legs of a hawk used in falconry.
- KEY PATTERN.** In Classical or Renaissance architecture a continuous fret pattern of key-like bends found on friezes, etc.
- KIRTLE.** A woman's long gown.
- KRAAL.** An enclosure for cattle or sheep.
- LACQUER.** See JAPANNING.
- LANCET.** The sharply pointed, lance-shaped window head and arch characteristic of English Gothic in the thirteenth century.
- LINENFOLD PANELLING.** Wooden or stone wall decoration resembling a fold of linen.
- LINTEL.** The stone or beam covering a doorway or other opening not having an arch.
- LIVERY CUPBOARD.** A cupboard or hutch usually with pierced panels, for keeping food in; similar to a dole cupboard in a church.
- LONG-BOW.** A bow used by the English in the later Middle Ages, notably at Agincourt in 1415, and distinguished from the short bow of earlier times by being six feet long.
- LYCH-GATE.** The roofed gateway to a churchyard under which the corpse is set down at a funeral to await the clergyman's arrival.
- LYNCHETS.** Low banks formed on hills by soil creep resulting from the breaking of the land surface and subsequent erosion. An indication of old roads and sometimes of cultivation.

**MACHIOLATION.** An opening in the floor of a projecting parapet, a gallery or the roof of a portal through which burning material could be dropped on assailants.

**MARQUETRY.** Inlaid work especially used as a decoration for furniture.

**MAZER.** A bowl, drinking cup or goblet without a foot, thought to have been originally made of mazer or maple wood.

**MEGALITHIC.** Constructed of large stones.

**MONOLITH.** A single block of stone, especially one shaped into a monument.

**MOULDING.** A term applied to all varieties of contour or outline given to the angles, projections or recesses of the various parts of a building. The enrichments in use and the mouldings themselves varied with each style and period; see illustrations.

**MULLION.** The upright bars of stone frequently employed in Gothic architecture to subdivide one window into two or more lights.

**NEWEL POST.** The stout post at the foot of each flight of stairs from which the balustrade or the handrail starts.

**NICHE.** A recess in a wall for a statue, vase or other upright ornament.

**OGEE-SHAPED OR OGIVAL ARCH.** A moulding or line of part concave and part convex curvature.

**OPEN FIELD.** Undivided land held in joint occupation by a community: often applied to unenclosed land.

**ORIEL.** A window projecting like a bay or bow window, not resting on the ground but thrown out above ground level and resting on a corbel.

**ORMOLU.** Gilded bronze used in the decoration of furniture.

**PALLADIAN.** A phase of fully developed Renaissance architecture introduced by the Italian architect Palladio in the sixteenth century and reaching England at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

**PALMETTE.** A Classical or Renaissance ornament somewhat resembling a palm leaf though with narrow finger-like divisions.

**PANELLING.** 1. Any decoration on masonry, ceilings, etc., formed of a series of sunk compartments. 2. Wall covering of woodwork formed of framework containing panels.

**PARCHEMIN.** Pannelling in the form of a scroll of parchment.

**PARQUETRY.** Inlaid work of wood on furniture or floors in which the pattern is formed of different kinds of wood.

**PEDIMENT.** The triangular part surmounting the pillars and crowning the front of a Classical or Renaissance building ; sometimes also found over windows and other openings.

**PILASTER.** A square column usually attached to a wall ; frequently used in Classical and Renaissance architecture in combination with columns.

**POLYGONAL.** Many sided.

**PORTCULLIS.** A strong and heavy framework or grating suspended by chains and made to slide up and down in vertical grooves at the sides of a gateway of a fortress, so as to be quickly let down as a defence against assault.

**PRESS.** A cupboard, sometimes hanging or sometimes in a niche in a wall ; used for clothes, books.

**PUTTI.** Representations of children, usually nude, in Italian Renaissance art.

**QUATREFOIL.** A four-leaved ornament occupying a circle in tracery or in a panel.

**QUERN.** Two stones used for grinding corn : the top one is rubbed up and down on the bottom one or is turned by a handle.

**RAFTER ROOF.** See illustrations of different kinds of rafter roof.

**RENAISSANCE.** Architecture which in England from the late sixteenth century onwards shows a revival of Classical features such as Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns, entablature, cornice and pediment.

**RUSTICATION.** Masonry, chiefly Classical and Renaissance, in which each stone is distinguished by a broad channel round it marking the joints.

**SCRIP.** A small bag or wallet carried by pilgrims to contain food for the journey.

**SCROLL.** Ornament showing winding spiral lines like the edge of a roll of paper.

**SPANDREL.** The space, often triangular, between the outside of an arch and the moulding enclosing it.

**STEELYARD.** A balance consisting of a lever with unequal arms, which moves on a pivot ; the article to be weighed is suspended from the shorter arm and a counterpoise is caused to move along the other arm until equilibrium is reached ; its place shows the weight.

**STRAPWORK.** An ornament, chiefly Elizabethan and Jacobean, which represents interlacing strap-like fillets.

**TANG.** The pointed extension of a tool by which it is secured to its handle.

- TRACERY.** The ornamental stone-work formed by the curving and interlacing of bars of stone, and occupying the heads of windows, panels, etc., in Gothic architecture. See illustrations of windows.
- TRANSOM.** A horizontal bar, usually of stone, across a window or panel.
- TREFOIL.** A three-leaved form of decoration found in the head of windows and panels.
- TRENCHER.** A flat piece of wood, square or circular, on which meat was served and cut up; a plate or platter.
- TRIFORIUM.** The story in a large church or cathedral intermediate between the arcade separating the nave and the aisles and the clerestory.
- TRILITHON.** A structure of three large stones, two upright and one resting on them as a lintel.
- TYMPANUM.** The filling at the head of an arch.
- TITHE.** The tenth part of the annual produce of agriculture, etc., being a support for the priesthood; the actual amount a subject of controversy throughout the ages.
- VAULT.** An arched ceiling to a building carried out in stone. In the Norman period mainly semi-circular arches were used. In the Gothic period as a result of the pointed arch the use of intersecting was introduced into vaulting. In Renaissance buildings a dome or a series of domes was more often used than vaulting. See illustrations of different kinds of vaults.
- VENEERING.** The process of applying thin flat strips or plates of fine wood to cabinet work; often a veneer of expensive wood applied to furniture of poorer quality.
- VENETIAN WINDOW.** A window in three separate apertures, the two side ones being narrow and separated from the central round-headed one by timber only.
- VOTIVE.** Dedicated or offered in consequence of a vow.

## APPENDIX I

### SUGGESTIONS FOR STARTING TO COLLECT HISTORICAL MATERIAL

There are a number of books, written in the form of gazeteers, which are useful in finding sites, buildings and museums. The first place in which to look for an account of the purely local antiquities is in the relevant volumes of the Victoria County History which includes both general articles on the county as a whole and detailed descriptions of each parish. Kelly's Directory, which is published for each town, gives useful information not only on the early history of the town but also on the dates of churches and other public buildings of later centuries. There are also other books, covering the whole country ; these specialize on different kinds of historical monuments and may be useful not only at home but also on holidays or school journeys and for reference material. The Pelican series of *Buildings of England* is being published for each county and contains many illustrations. In it the descriptions include prehistoric and Roman sites, medieval and later antiquities and churches, Non-conformist chapels, public buildings and houses of each century. The Regional Guides, published by the Stationary Office, contain useful descriptions and illustrations of historical monuments under the care of the Ministry of Works. *Prehistoric and Roman Monuments of England and Wales* by Jacquetta Hawkes is also useful. Index Publishers produce annually two pamphlets, *Museums and Galleries in Great Britain and Ireland* and *Historic Houses and Castles in Great Britain and Northern Ireland* which contain numerous small illustrations and very brief notes to give an idea of what collections and buildings are open to the public.

Most prehistoric and Roman sites, parish churches, cathedrals, abbeys, old houses, castles and museums publish guide books, catalogues and picture postcards. These can be obtained in advance and are always worth studying before a visit. It is also useful for schools and for individual teachers to make a reference

collection of such guide books, catalogues and postcards not only from local places but also from places further afield. The small picture books and illustrated catalogues published by the Victoria and Albert Museum for instance, contain much interesting information on furniture, silver and costume.

The county library is the best place in which to start collecting information. The books mentioned above are obtainable there and in addition there will be many other purely local books describing churches, trades, village and family histories. As well as modern works there may be some early histories and guide books describing buildings now vanished. There will also be the book of county place names in which can be found derivations of names of villages, fields, houses and physical landmarks. Meanings of names can be tracked down in *The Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names*. These place name books should be used in conjunction with large scale maps : six inches or two-and-a-half inches to the mile.

As well as these local books the county library will also contain some of the early topographical accounts of England such as those listed in the bibliographies of the chapters on the Town and on the Village, and most of the contemporary works in the bibliographies in the chapters on the Romans, the Church and Castles and Country houses. Those that are not on the shelves will be obtainable by the librarian from other county libraries. These more general books can be studied in conjunction with the purely local books. Some of them mention given localities and many of them describe people and situations that might have existed anywhere in England at their period.

It is also worth asking for the publications of the local societies. The relevant societies may be archaeological, architectural or record societies and their publications may contain, for instance, reports of local excavations, transcriptions of parish records or family account books. It is also worth enquiring if there are any Government Blue Books such as the Report of the Commissioners of the Poor Law in 1834 or the Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Whether at home or on holiday a visit to the local museum will be most rewarding. Even the smallest village collection has some local by-gones and probably local archaeological specimens.



Larger collections, such as county museums, often have period rooms or furniture, costume and usually some china and silver. They also contain the local archaeological finds and perhaps exhibits describing local trades, agricultural implements and domestic utensils. Sometimes there is an ethnographical section containing tools comparable with prehistoric tools. Occasionally engravings by early nineteenth-century artists are to be found in the museum and they may illustrate buildings which have since been demolished. Old maps are sometimes also to be found. Serious students or teachers can ask the curator or the keeper of the relevant department about anything special. Most museums have a good deal more material than they can display and often this is available for study. Many museums also loan specimens to schools and training colleges.

People who wish to study manuscript sources must go to the County Record Office. Here the County Archivist or his assistants will show a teacher or a student how to find what he wants in the indexes. *County Records* by Emminson and Gray, a pamphlet published by the Historical Association in 1948, gives an account of all the different kinds of document that are likely to be kept in a County Record Office and a list of the facilities afforded to students in the existing Record Offices. Manuscript sources are easily readable for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but much more difficult for the seventeenth century and earlier and students should be guided by the archivist in their choice of document. Legal records are difficult to interpret; medieval records are in Latin, but family letters, diaries, accounts, inventories and parish records are among the easier records to understand. Illustrative material is also available in the Record Office; for instance early engravings, guide books, maps such as Enclosure and Tithe maps, town plans, prospects and views. Material cannot be borrowed from a Record Office; sometimes an archivist will arrange to bring records to a school or training college but any serious study will have to be done in the Record Office itself.

Sometimes wills with their inventories, glebe terriers which describe church property and other ecclesiastical records are kept at the Diocesan Headquarters but very often they have been deposited at the Record Office. In the same way some family

records are still with their owners and some parish records still with the vicar, but, on the whole, people find that the responsibility of looking after their documents, and of perhaps making them available is difficult to carry out so that more and more records are coming into the Record Office.

The Library, the Museum and the Record Office are the chief local repositories of historical material but there are various other sources worth exploring. The Newspaper Office may have early numbers of the local newspaper and the National Newspaper Library which is part of the British Museum has a number of provincial newspapers. Those wishing to break new ground and to explore records probably hitherto uncatalogued may find a business firm or a solicitor's firm which still retains its old records. Finally it should not be forgotten that conversations with the older local inhabitants may lead to interesting discoveries. These people may have access to old buildings unknown to the authors of printed books; they may practise old crafts or be able to describe customs that have died out.

## APPENDIX II

### SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR WORK WITH CHILDREN ON HISTORICAL BUILDINGS, SITES AND MUSEUMS

When we organize a school visit to an historical building, site or museum we should bear certain aims in mind. First and foremost we are trying to bring history alive for the children and to arouse in them an interest in historical objects and buildings, so that they will later seek them out of their own accord. This lasting interest will only be obtained if we can show our children how to find their own way about buildings and museums, so our second aim is to teach them how to find things out for themselves from these new sources of information. This involves showing them how to deduce from museum objects and from buildings details about how they were made and how and what they were used for. We are in fact also opening their eyes, training their powers of observation and recording and developing their intelligence.

#### PLANNING VISITS

Visits should always be planned as an integral part of a piece of school work covering several weeks or even a whole term ; it is a great waste of opportunity if the visit is simply an isolated outing like a Sunday school treat. The need for the visit will grow out of the questions the children ask during their school work. When they are studying the Elizabethan theatre then is the time to visit an Elizabethan house to find out how Shakespeare's contemporaries lived. In this way they will get an idea of an age as a whole and will be able to study the background which alone makes buildings and museums comprehensible. At school the good history teacher will provide reference books with plenty of photographs and reproductions of historical illustrations so that the children can do their own 'research' under his guidance. On the visit they will simply be extending the field of research to include topographical and museum material

as well as books. If they have been taught to make deductions and discoveries for themselves from reference books and to make drawings and notes of what they have discovered, then they should find no difficulty in working systematically on a visit.

Generally speaking two or more visits are much more valuable than one visit; the children are so eager not to miss anything the first time that they cannot work well. If possible it is better, for instance, to make a separate visit to a period house for each of the periods that are represented there. If only one visit can be made then the best time is probably about the middle of the work planned so that there will be plenty of time for preparation beforehand and for 'follow-up' work afterwards. Most visits will take place during school hours but sometimes it may be possible to take or even send a group of children on Saturday. Moreover there is often an opportunity of taking children on visits to places of historical interest when they are at school camps. A wider outlook altogether is needed; outdoor history has to start with the locality but it should not be confined to it. On school journeys, both at home and abroad, children often visit an environment quite unlike their own and it is the teacher's task to help them to appreciate it by showing them how to explore it. In the same way it need not be considered impossible for children who live in a town to visit and explore a village.

Before a visit is undertaken the teacher will want to go to the place to find out what is available. It is very important for him to make a careful note of what is displayed in a museum and what parts of a building are on show so that he can discuss with the children what they will be able to find out from the labels and objects. He should also find out something about the history of a building, the work of a museum or the excavation of an archaeological site so that he can discuss with the children the kind of place they will visit. Some of this information can be found in the catalogue, the rest from the curator in a small place and from the guide lecturer in a large place. Occasionally it is worth arranging for someone on the staff of a museum or building to explain these things to the children when they arrive, but this often takes up too much valuable time on the visit.

On a visit many teachers simply hand their classes over to a guide lecturer who gives the children a general tour, which may

last an hour, after which they 'draw what interests them'. These are the classes still frequently to be seen in the galleries, clustered round a lecturer, most of them unable to see what he is talking about and all of them getting restive as they gradually cease to follow his explanation. When they are released they are too tired and too confused to do much drawing and they run aimlessly through the building, looking probably only at what strikes them as either quaint or familiar. These unfortunate children are sometimes asked to write an essay about their visit when they return.

The main reason why such visits are not a success is because the children's minds are being filled with miscellaneous information, interesting in itself, but not related to their experience. They are being asked to remember instead of to find out. A guide lecturer's job is to explain what is in the museum or historic building but, unless he is a trained teacher with a special interest in teaching, he will not feel responsible for seeing that the children individually learn anything. This is the work of the class teacher who knows what the children have been doing in school and what they are capable of. He only can make sure that the children will begin to learn on their visit how to find out what they themselves want to know.

The lecture tour in the museum is as outdated educationally as the lecture in the class-room, yet it is surprising how many teachers and museums still resort to it. It is much better to help children to learn to use for themselves the tools of knowledge in order to answer questions which have arisen in class work. For this they need some kind of work-sheet which will help them to find, classify and draw a limited number of objects.

The children can be given work-sheets with spaces for drawings and headings for notes. This is a device used by some museum teachers who have to deal with large numbers of children unknown to them. A class teacher will be able to prepare the children himself and need not resort to this method which tends to restrict self-expression and individual approach. It is better for the teacher and the children together to make lists of objects to look for and a note of what to find out about each. Often it will be best if objects are drawn and the drawings labelled with perhaps a note underneath about material and use.

These are some examples of working lists that can be used in archaeological museums. For the New Stone Age, tools such as axe-head, knife, graver, scraper and chisel could be drawn with, where relevant, the wooden handles that have long since perished; sharp edges could then be labelled and a note made on how the tools were made and what they were used for. For the Iron Age, the method might be varied and the children, instead of drawing, could find the evidence that Iron Age people spun, wove, grew corn, had horses and carts. To do this they would have to have heard beforehand something about primitive and prehistoric methods of doing these things.

For the Roman period the class might be divided into groups studying home life, weapons, farming, trades, according to what is in the museum. The group studying home life might draw different kinds of pots and find out what they were used for and perhaps how the Romans made pottery; and they might also draw a Roman lamp with the wick burning and the hole for the oil marked.

When visiting buildings and sites we have to adopt a different method. It is often a good idea to give the children a plan and to discuss with them a list of things they could find on the visit and put in on the plan. In a castle they might mark the site of the portcullis, drawbridge, towers, well and domestic buildings. In a church they can find and mark in the rood screen or stairs, piscina, chantry chapel, stoup, squint; and in a ruined abbey they can mark the site of the various monastic buildings together with such details as the night stairs into the choir and the bookshelves in the cloisters. For younger children it is sometimes better to put numbers on to the plan so that they can go straight to the right spot and find out what is there. Older children, if they have been taught to recognize architectural styles, can colour the plan according to each style represented in the building. Plans can also be used when visiting Roman sites. In a fort children would be able to find and mark in the gatehouse, towers, granaries, shrine, officers' quarters, and baths. It is very important to make sure that the children have had some practice in using plans and that they know the meaning and function of all the places that they are putting in: they can make a note of these in a key on the plan. In a ruined building such a

a Roman site or an abbey of which only foundations remain, the children will be searching for clues to help them to imagine what the building once looked like: for instance they will recognize the warming room in a monastery because it has the remains of a fireplace. One cannot get everything one wants on to a plan, so plans always need supplementing with sketches of, for instance, the pattern of a mosaic floor at a Roman site.

For a visit to a period house or to period rooms in a museum, lists of the furniture and fittings to be noticed in each room might be made. Children can draw furniture, fireplaces, doorways, and make notes on floors, walls, ceilings. They can make a note of the different kinds of material used, and, if relevant, how such processes as marquetry, inlays, and veneering are carried out. They can sketch details of costume and hair-styles from contemporary portraits, and for future reference might make a note of the material and colour of clothes! If a contemporary view of the house is available they can sketch the lay-out of the garden for the period that they are studying. All this is too much for an individual child to do on one visit, but it could be shared among several groups of children or done by the same children on successive visits.

Sometimes it is interesting to teach older children to recognize the decorative motifs of a period so that they will learn to distinguish one period from another not only in architecture but also in woodwork, sculpture and silver. Drawings of the chief motifs of a period can be made and cyclostyled by the teacher, and the children can find all the objects with the same motifs, and either draw them or make lists of them. For instance in a fourteenth-century church they might be given drawings of ball flower ornament, finial, gable, crocket, quatrefoil and curvilinear tracery which they can find on windows, fonts and tombs. In an Adam room they might be given drawings of a bow, ram's head, wheat sheaf, palmette and rosette which they can find on walls, ceilings, carpets, furniture, porcelain and silver. This method of work not only trains the children's powers of observation but also helps them to appreciate the artistic whole of a period.

On a visit to a museum of old crafts, group work is usually indicated because there are not enough specimens of any one

craft to occupy more than a few children. Before the visit the children should have seen pictures of the craftsmen at work so that when they come to draw the tools in the museum they will have a mental picture of the way in which they were used. Sometimes a child can draw a number of tools of which he has been given the names and then make a note of how they were used. Or he can find and draw the tools that, for instance, the wheelwright used for measuring the rim of the wheel, for hollowing out the felloes, for lifting the cart up and for making spokes. Where a local industry has a complicated series of processes which involve machinery not easy to draw, then it is worth the teacher's while to give the child a work-sheet with the machinery already drawn and ask him to identify the various pieces and to write a note on their function and method of use. Some children will probably have parents working in the industry, so they will already know something about the processes even though the old methods will be different from the modern ones.

Sometimes with a very large class it is difficult to organize class visits but it is possible either to send a group of older children or to go with a group of younger children out of school hours. This can be done for a visit to any of the types of places that we have already discussed but it is particularly suitable where children need to find out information either from old craftsmen, who perhaps would not be so forthcoming with thirty children as they would be with six, or when children are to go to look at the outsides of buildings in crowded streets where a large class would be quite impossible. With a small group, as with a large group, it is very important that the children themselves know why they are going. When a group visits the blacksmith they should be primed with questions to ask him on behalf of the rest of the class and ready to take down what he says. Perhaps a note of warning should be sounded here; a working blacksmith should not be treated in the same way as a case of tools in the museum. The primary purpose of visiting him is to hear his experience and to see him at work and the teacher should always go beforehand to make sure that it is possible for him to receive the children.

When sending a group of children into the town to find out about a Roman wall or an old gateway care should be taken that



here also they have something definite to look for : crenellations, machiolations, arrow slits, grooves for the portcullis and so on, and that they are not asked to draw the wall or the gateway if it means standing in everybody's way to do it.

In a study of a village either by resident children or by children from a nearby town there is plenty of historical field work that can be done. With an outline map of the village the children can walk through it putting in all the pre-twentieth-century buildings, colouring them perhaps according to age. Some of them can talk to old residents or visit the blacksmith or go into the inn to see if the open fireplace is still there. Others can go to the local museum to look for obsolete tools of farm labourers or craftsmen.

In a town, visits can be made to the museum for bygones and to buildings such as the church, period house, castle, gate-house, guildhall and inn. It is worth while also to send groups of children to look at any streets which still contain a row of old houses even though these cannot be entered. Some sketches of the details of doors, windows and chimneys can be made and an over-all impression of the house or houses gathered.

In the above examples only a selection of all the possible kinds of work-lists has been given but it is hoped that enough ideas have been suggested for the teacher to be able to make adaptations to suit his own class and locality. The choice of work will depend on the age and sex of the children, and on the resources of the locality and the background material available. For instance girls usually enjoy old kitchens while boys usually prefer the old crafts. When deciding which aspect of a building or museum to study, the teacher will be guided by the children's previous knowledge and interests and by the questions they ask in school and he need not feel that he has to cover everything that is there. Every effort should be made to collect material for as complete a picture as possible and to ensure that the children understand the historical context of the place that they are visiting.

When planning a visit there are one or two important general points to bear in mind,

On a visit to a building we should remember that probably the most interesting aspect for the children is the way in which

people used to live there. We have therefore to concentrate on showing them how to find out what it was like to live in the building they are visiting : how the Roman house was heated, how the castle was defended, what the Elizabethans wore and how they had their meals. Some of this can only be discovered from books but a good deal can be found out from the building itself as we have seen in previous chapters. For some reason this aspect of buildings is often ignored by teachers and guide lecturers who tend to concentrate on describing the architectural styles of a building. We shall have to teach them to recognize the style of the period they are studying but the main part of the work will be in training them to deduce a way of life from the evidence before them. This can only be done as we have seen above by giving them certain things to look for.

It will be noticed that in the suggestions for work on visits there is great emphasis on drawing. Many things can be expressed by labelled drawings better than by notes, and it is valuable for children to learn to express themselves graphically as well as in writing. Drawing also helps to train their powers of observation. They have to look carefully at an object when they draw it and often see details they would otherwise miss ; therefore it is worth encouraging accuracy. Sometimes children can do more than simply make as accurate a drawing as possible. They can draw objects in such a way as to show how they were used : a prehistoric tool with the handle that it would have had, an Elizabethan spit with the joints of meat on it in front of a roaring open fire. This kind of drawing means that the children must have been well prepared beforehand so that they will not only recognize prehistoric tools and old fashioned cooking implements, but will also immediately be able to see them in their context.

This leads us to another important point. Children should be encouraged to draw a group of specimens which together make up more than the sum of individual specimens. That is, a child should at the end of the visits have looked at and drawn a group of objects which give him an idea which he can take away with him. For example, on a visit to a prehistoric collection, his drawings should not be simply of miscellaneous tools and utensils but should be classified under headings of flint weapons or

domestic pottery so that he can begin to have an idea of Stone Age man's hunting equipment or Stone Age woman's cooking utensils and to realize that all these things were made by a people who had only certain limited powers and resources. In a period house or room the classifying is to some extent already done, but usually there is more that can be added : the relevant portraits from another part of the house or the silver and porcelain from another part of the museum.

This does not mean that the children should study more than one thing at once ; they may cover a variety of different objects but all of them should be within the same period. It is essential to limit the scope of the visit so that each child can understand its whole aim. Not more than one subject can be studied on each visit. The previous chapters have indicated what these subjects might be : for instance the Roman army, town or villa according to the site or a period house at the most important stage in its history. On later visits or at school other subjects in connection with these can be studied.

So far we have stressed the importance of preparing the children properly at school before they go on a visit. It is worth pointing out that too much preparation has its disadvantages no less than too little. The children must come on the visit eager to explore and to find out certain answers to questions which have cropped up in their class work but they should not come so primed that they know exactly what there is in the museum or building and so that there are no surprises left for them.

#### THE VISIT ITSELF

There are various general points to consider on a visit. The children should know beforehand how they are to proceed, that in a church they cannot run about talking noisily, that a museum is a place of research and that therefore they must not get in the way of other people who are working there. It is a good idea to start with the children all together in order to orientate their maps or to point out the cases that have the relevant specimens or the rooms that have the best furniture. They can then disperse quietly. Even if all the class is doing the same work it is worth dividing them into groups, with a leader if they are to be very scattered, so that each group can start at a

different place and so avoid overcrowding. It is important that the children should really work independently, that they should learn to find objects and to read labels for themselves, so the teacher should not stand over them any more than he would if they were trying to find something out from a book. However he should be in some easily found place where the children can consult him. Sometimes, if the children are finding it difficult to know how to tackle their work, it is a good idea to gather some or all of them together to discuss how far they have got, what remains to be done and whether the information they are recording is going to be intelligible when they return home.

In any type of historical building, it is always worth calling all the children together at the end and trying to imagine with them what the place was like when it was in use. This is the moment when the teacher, drawing on what the children have already learnt from books and pictures, can take the lead and fire the children's imaginations. In a medieval church he might recreate with them the scene at a pilgrimage, in an Elizabethan house the scene at a banquet, in a castle the storming of the walls. Perhaps this will give them ideas of what still remains to be done when they get home. For instance, they might imagine the Elizabethans in doublet and hose, dining at high table, eating and drinking from silver-gilt plates and goblets, but find that they do not yet know what food the Elizabethans ate nor yet how it was cooked.

At an archaeological site or museum there is an opportunity for the teacher and children to try to work out how the archaeologists have discovered so much from what at first seems so little evidence. For instance there is at Leicester City Museum an exhibit showing the skeleton of an Anglo-Saxon woman as she was found; she has bronze brooches on her shoulders, paste beads round her neck, two belt rings by her pelvic girdle, two girdle hangers on her thighs, a bone bracelet on her arm, a bone handle of a knife just below her hand and a large crystal bead on her chest. From this exhibit we can see how pagans were buried and what clothes the Anglo-Saxons wore. This kind of approach is valuable in teaching children how to interpret the evidence they see and is the kind of detective work they enjoy. At the same time they can be shown how to link the objects

in the museum with the site: the teacher can mention the pottery and coins that were found in the foundations of a house and helped to date it, and the votive pots that were found in the temple and helped to show to whom it was dedicated. This kind of approach need not be confined to Roman sites; it can also be used in ruined abbeys and castles where not enough of the building is left standing for the children to imagine what it was like without a good deal of detective work first.

In a museum, especially in a local one, help from the curator or guide lecturer is sometimes valuable. It is always worth asking if the children can handle any of the exhibits. It is particularly useful if they can handle prehistoric tools because it is really only when they have the tool in their hands that they can see how it was used, and how the handle was fitted on. It is also useful when dealing with by-gones if one of the museum staff can be persuaded to demonstrate how some of the old utensils were used. Children are much more likely to take an interest in a spinning-wheel or a flail if they can understand how they work by seeing them in action. Most curators will do this gladly and it is surprising how few teachers seem to take advantage of their potentially friendly attitude. But it is essential to realize that however useful demonstrations and explanations by museum staff are, they do not by themselves ensure that the children have learnt anything. The children should make appropriate drawings and notes after demonstrations have been given and it is important that this work should be done on the visit, like all good 'field work', and not afterwards from memory.

Finally before we leave the place that we have visited we must sound a note of warning against the overplanned expedition. This is not a contradiction of all that has already been said. It is essential that children should have some work to do, but a little time should be allowed also for them to explore independently and to find unexpected treasures. They should have time to gaze in awe at the Egyptian mummies, to run round the castle ramparts to climb to the top of the cathedral tower, to look at the carp in the moat. It is usually best to have this unplanned exploration for about a quarter of an hour at the end of the visit. This will probably be the time when individual children unconsciously realize that it will be worth coming back another day, perhaps

bringing their parents, and it may be the time when a child will find something that will lead him and others along a new line of discovery. This time for satisfying curiosity or for experiencing awe and wonder is a very important part of a visit, especially the first visit, because on it may be built a lasting interest in historical buildings and museums.

A visit should not normally last more than an hour and a half unless there is a break, in which case it might go on the whole morning or afternoon. But it can be seen at once that on one visit, however long, each child will not accomplish a great deal and that much will need to be done at school to pull the work of the various groups together and to gather supplementary information. In the same way 'follow up' work at school will need to be done between each visit of a series, and at the end of the series.

#### FOLLOWING-UP VISITS

A visit nearly always provides a great stimulus and it is important that the teacher should be ready with books and pictures for the children to carry on work. The work done in the museum or building should be integrated with the rest of the work, field drawings and notes added to and mounted. It does not matter whether the work is kept in individual note books or whether it provides a basis for a class model or frieze, but it is important that each child should know that his work on the visit was worth doing and has led to something else.

Some of the work connected with a visit is bound to be on the locality but the teacher will keep in mind its wider significance. When they are studying prehistoric tools the children's attention should be drawn to the peoples to-day who are still in the same stage of culture. These modern primitive people, as we saw in Chapter 1, can be a great help in interpreting the activities of prehistoric man, and the children should also be made aware of the fact that we share the world with peoples living an existence totally different from our own. When the children are studying the Romans they should begin to realize that in those days Britain was a rather distant part of an enormous empire centred on the Mediterranean sea. It is essential therefore to introduce them to Latin authors and to photographs of Italian sculpture

not only to help them in finding out about Roman Britain, but also to help them to understand the Rome from which much of our heritage has come. They will get some idea that Britain was part of a cosmopolitan empire if they discover, as we did in Chapter 2, that a British freed slave-woman could marry a Palmyrene from distant Asia Minor ; or that a villa owner could have his floor decorated with mosaics illustrating Virgil. Similarly when they are studying their local church or visiting an abbey or cathedral, the children should gather from the work some notion that medieval England was part of a much larger entity called Christendom and that in some countries and in some places in England Roman Catholic services are being carried out to-day in much the same way as they were in the Middle Ages in England. Whatever historical buildings or museums we visit we shall find that the study takes us away from the locality to something larger. When we organize work on our local period house, village or town, we should try to follow it up by studying later a contrasting type of house, village or town in order to bring out the full significance of our own.

There is an endless variety of 'follow up' work possible and only a few of the more interesting things that have been done can be mentioned. Sometimes the work simply leads to the collection of more information. This is valuable in that it gives the children the experience of finding information from a variety of different sources and of seeing that this adds up to more than information simply from books. A visit to a prehistoric or Roman collection may lead to interest in local sites so that maps can be made plotting all the local finds, and visits undertaken to those that are interesting. This may lead to the children making finds, which they can label, for a small class museum. A visit to a medieval castle may lead to an increased interest in weapons, armour and accounts of battles, and the children may get so steeped in the time and place that they can make imaginative pictures or write imaginative accounts of the battles that took place there.

It is probably only after the visit that the children will be ready to look at contemporary written sources. If they are studying a period house then they will need the photographs of furniture and tableware, the reproductions of contemporary

portraits and the printed inventories of furniture and clothes that we discussed in Chapter 3. If they have been visiting a medieval church then the photographs of medieval church plate and vestments and the inventories of church belongings made at the Reformation, that we discussed in Chapter 4, should be provided. If they are studying their own town then reproductions of maps, engravings and paintings will be needed. Whatever kind of building or museum they have been visiting they will need to consult the relevant topographical authority such as Celia Fiennes, Defoe, Cobbett and the relevant diaries or letters such as those of Pepys or Parson Woodforde. We have seen in earlier chapters how these first-hand sources can be used to build up a picture of life at a certain time in the past ; it remains to be emphasized that children as well as adults can use these sources if they are helped. They will have to be taught how to use an index ; and where there is no index, places in books must be marked for them. Sometimes it is a help if they write a note of what they want to find out before they start so that they will in effect be carrying out ' research ' in books in rather the same way as they were carrying it out in the museum.

Where it is not possible to find an inventory or account book of the actual church or house the children are studying, then one that corresponds in date and type can be used. The inventories in the *Paston Letters* will do for most large medieval houses, the inventory of Fountains Abbey for most Cistercian abbeys. Obviously if the class is making a study of the town in which the children live then maps of that town and no other will do, although descriptions of town entertainments, pictures of houses and so on might be borrowed from other places.

Whatever first-hand material we use with children we shall find that we have to teach them the traditions of the age which produced it. They must not think that medieval artists were queer because they painted their figures on a larger scale than the landscape behind them : or that the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century people were odd because they did not spell in the same way as we do. The teacher will also have to exercise discretion in deciding when his children are ready for a particular kind of material. The eleven-year-old can get interested in finding details in the complicated scenes depicted in medieval manuscripts and tapestries but will not be able to master extracts from



seventeenth-century account books in their original spelling, so for this age group spellings, though not necessarily phrasing, should be modernized. It is sometimes amusing for older children to guess what oddly spelt words mean but they need help at the beginning: the teacher will have to read an extract with a group before he can expect individual children to do it alone. It should be said at once that account books and inventories are among the easiest kinds of documents to use because they are to all intents and purposes simply lists, and most of the unfamiliar words for material, food and so on can be looked up in the Oxford English Dictionary.

Hitherto we have been talking about using printed sources with children and for most the printed source with modernized spelling will be enough. Just occasionally, however, it might be worth starting grammar school children on manuscript material if there are in the local Record Office a group of suitable family letters or some parish records of the kind discussed in Chapter 5. If the documents are chosen from the eighteenth or early nineteenth century there should be no difficulty in reading the handwriting. For instance, two children could work out occupations from parish registers or analyse the work of constable or churchwarden from their account books.

Sometimes a visit can result in quite a different sort of work. The prehistoric collection might stimulate in the children the desire to carry out some of early men's activities for themselves. Chipping flints is too difficult and dangerous for younger children but older ones might try it. Making coil pots and decorating them with thumb-nail marks is always a possibility. Spinning can be done with a clay whorl, a stick as a spindle and some raw wool; weaving on an upright loom can be improvised. At a camp children can always make bows and arrows, and those who are scouts can probably teach the others how to make fire by rubbing two sticks together. This kind of activity is great fun for children but it is also educational because they are trying, in their way, to re-live the past.

Model-making is an obvious sequel to a visit. For instance a Roman fort or a medieval castle can be modelled, but care should be taken that it resembles the fort or castle visited, that it is as nearly as possible the real thing and not just a 'typical' one. Soldiers might be made to go with it and young children will

spontaneously play at attacking and defending it, and in doing so they will learn, by re-living in their own way, how a Roman or medieval fort was won or lost.

Models of period houses can also be made ; the façade perhaps and, on a larger scale, some of the rooms with furniture and figures. If the children are sufficiently stimulated by reading about the activities of the people who used to live in their house they may be able to dress puppets in period costume and to act silent plays with them. This is probably more profitable than attempting to write period plays which are very difficult to act because of the language and the costume. Period dances are a possibility and appeal to girls : for instance, the atmosphere of an eighteenth-century ball can to some extent be captured by dancing the minuet.

We have seen what social history children can learn from a properly prepared visit to a museum, historical building or site. How much they learn on the visit depends very much on what they know beforehand and how far they have taken part in the planning. It cannot be too often emphasized that a visit should be part of work already being carried on, that children should go to a house or a museum in the spirit of research and be encouraged to stay or return again of their own accord. In the work that they do on the visit we have seen that the children can be taught by a variety of methods, each of which will bring out different abilities in individual children. They have to learn the shape of tools and of buildings by making accurate drawings of them, but as a contrast they can learn by deduction and interpretation how a tool was used, what it is made of and what it was used for. In the work after the visit the children should be shown how to go on from the local interest with which they started, to explore its historical context. Finally the teacher will realize that the training of the children in observation and interpretation of evidence, in acquisition and recording of information is simply a means to an end. The teacher's aim is to show the children how to find out enough about the past to create for themselves mental pictures of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and later people living and working. He will know that his children are beginning to appreciate the past when from topographical specimen, literary and documentary material that he has provided, they begin to create pictures or stories of men and women in historical settings.

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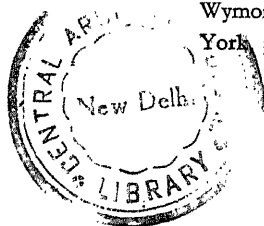
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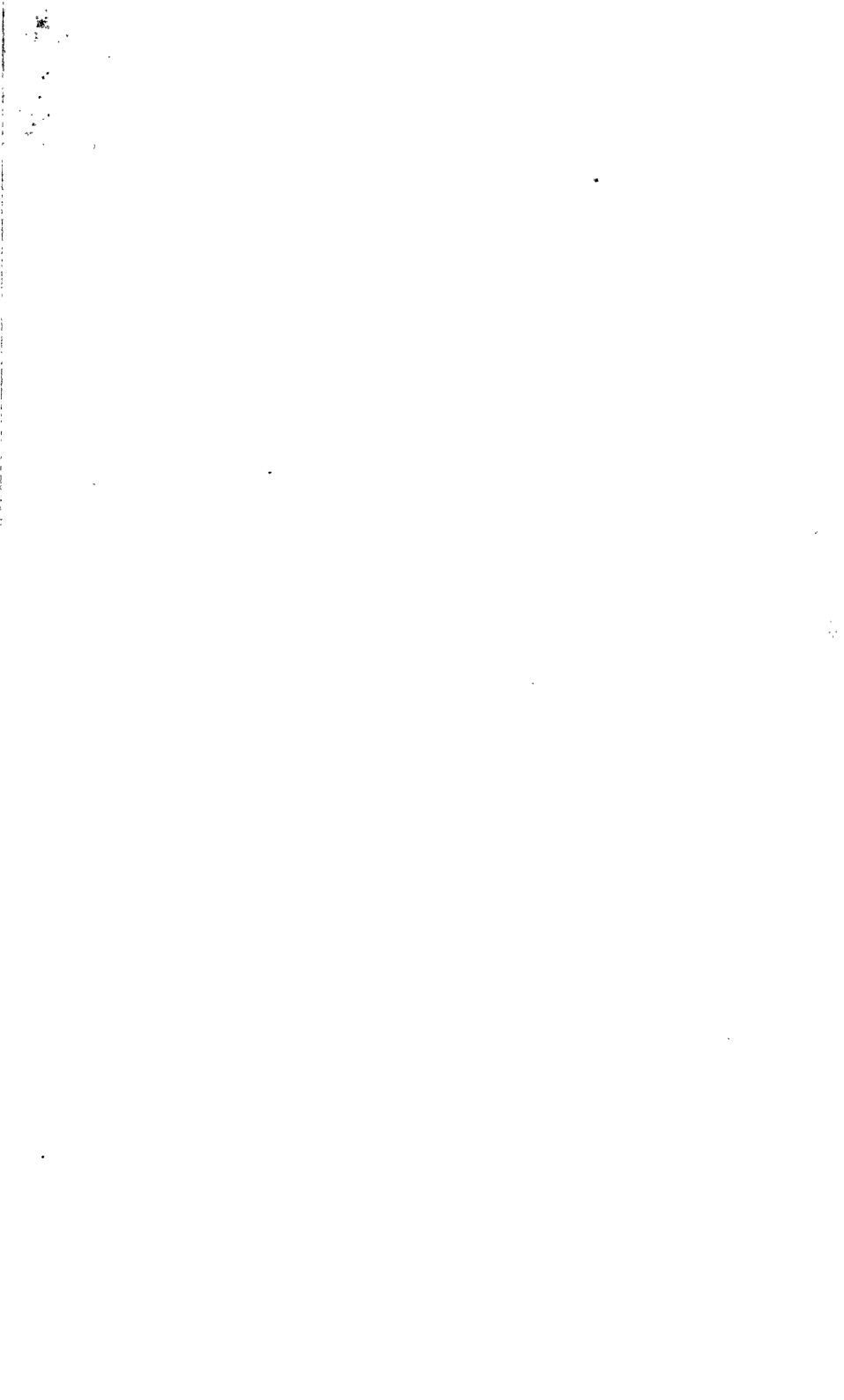
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